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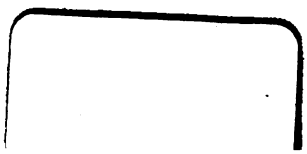

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND REIGN OF

KING GEORGE THE THIRD.

MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND REIGN OF

KING GEORGE THE THIRD.

BY

J. HENEAGE JESSE,

AUTHOR OF "MEMOIRS OF THE COURT OF ENGLAND UNDER THE STUARTS;" "MEMOIRS OF KING RICHARD III.," ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND REIGN OF GEORGE THE THIRD.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Birth of the Princess Elizabeth, and of Prince Ernest Augustus—Discreditable conduct of the King's brother, Henry Duke of Cumberland—His marriage—His death—Clandestine marriage of the Duke of Gloucester—The King afterwards reconciled to the Duke and Duchess—Princess Caroline Matilda, wife of Christian VII. of Denmark — Dissolute Character of the Danish King — Domestic infelicities—*Coup d'état* at the Danish Court—Banishment of the Queen—Her residence in Zell Castle—Her death—Decease of the Princess Dowager of Wales.

We have now to record a few events, of a personal and domestic character, which occurred in the lives of George the Third and his Queen, since we last intruded upon their privacy at Buckingham House and Windsor. On the 17th of June 1770 Queen Charlotte gave birth to a daughter, the Princess Elizabeth, afterwards Landgravine of Hesse Homberg, and on the 5th of June, the following year, was born her fifth son, Ernest Augustus, afterwards successively Duke of Cumberland and King of Hanover. Surrounded by a young and beautiful family, and formed, as George the Third was, by nature, for the enjoyment of home-endearments and home-pleasures, his life at this period might be presumed to have been a happy one. In addition, however, to political anxieties, he was not exempted from the ordinary cares and sorrows which are the lot of humanity. A source of especial vexation to him at this time was the

flagrant misconduct of one of his younger brothers, the Duke of Cumberland.

Henry Frederick Duke of Cumberland, fourth son of Frederick Prince of Wales, was born on the 26th of October 1745. A handsome countenance made some amends for the shortness of his stature and the meanness of his abilities. Walpole dismisses him from his agreeable pages as a pert, chattering, dissipated, and frivolous youth, proud of his exalted rank almost to vulgarity, yet at the same time preferring low society.* Doubtless, much that was to be lamented in the Duke's character and conduct was attributable to the exclusive and reprehensible system under which he had been educated by his mother, the Princess Dowager. Kept in close and irksome seclusion till he had reached the years of manhood, and accustomed to no other society but that of sycophants and dependents, it is perhaps not much to be wondered at, that a young Prince of warm passions and weak character should, on obtaining his freedom, have rushed at once from the schoolroom to the stews and the night cellars.

Had the Duke of Cumberland thought proper to confine his excesses within the limits of ordinary profligacy, the world would doubtless have troubled itself little with either his vices or his follies. When, however, his name became mixed up, under peculiarly scandalous circumstances, with that of a young and beautiful woman of high rank and Norman race—when, for the first time in England, a Prince of the Blood was dragged into a Court of Justice to defend himself in an action for adultery—the case became a very different one. His victim, a daughter of the house of Vernon, was wife of Richard first Earl Grosvenor.† Following

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 105, 402; vol. iv. p. 165.

† Henrietta, daughter of Henry Vernon, Esq., of Hilton in the County of Stafford, by Lady Henrietta Wentworth, daughter of Thomas Earl of Strafford. By her marriage with Lord Grosvenor, which took place on the 19th of July 1764, she became the mother of Robert second Earl Grosvenor and of three other children who died young. In September 1802, nearly thirty years after her separation from her husband, the Countess remarried General George Porter, Member of Parliament for Stockbridge.

her from London, on her departure to her husband's seat, Eaton Hall in Cheshire, the Duke took up his abode at a small public-house in the neighbourhood of the Hall, met her in disguise, and effected her ruin. The Earl—himself a notorious libertine—subsequently recovered ten thousand pounds damages from the Duke, a sum which it will be perceived his Royal Highness found some difficulty in paying. June 23, 1770.

The King to Lord North.

"*5 Novr.* 1770.

"My brothers have this day applied about the means of paying the Duke of Cumberland's damages and costs, which, if not paid this day se'nnight, the Proctors will certainly force the house, which at this licentious time will occasion reflexions on the rest of the family. Whatever can be done ought to be done." *

Scarcely less discreditable than the profligate details which were elicited at the trial, was the evidence which it afforded of the grossly imperfect state of his Royal Highness's education. Several letters, addressed by him to his paramour, were read in open court, the spelling, style, and grammar of which were so lamentably contemptible, as to provoke frequent bursts of laughter from the audience. For instance, in one of these precious effusions he writes—"I *got* to supper about nine o'clock, but I could not eat, and so *got* to bed about ten." "His royal highness's diction and learning," writes Walpole, "scarce exceeded that of a cabin boy, as those eloquent epistles, existing in print, may testify. Some, being penned on board ship, were literal versifications of Lord Dorset's ballad—

"'To all ye ladies now at land
We men at sea indite,
But first would have you understand
How *hard* it is to write.'"†

Lady Grosvenor, in the Duke's letters, is addressed by

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 72. Edition 1858. In another note, dated the same day, the King calculates the sum of money likely to be required as £13,000. † Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iv. p. 164.

him as his "ever dearest little angel." He "kisses her dearest little hair."—"I have your heart;" he writes to her on one occasion, "and it lies warm in my breast. I hope mine feels as easy to you."*

Neither did the Duke's libertinism and shallowness of mind complete his offences. Not content with having entailed upon himself the scorn and derision of the world, the frivolous Prince, by abandoning to solitude and shame the unhappy partner of his guilt, proved that his heart was as faulty as his understanding. So shortlived was his passion, that scarcely had a verdict been pronounced upon him in a Court of Justice, before he commenced another disreputable intrigue with a married woman of great personal beauty, with whom he made no scruple of publicly parading himself, whenever she appeared at the theatre or at similar places of diversion. Fortunately her husband, a wealthy and obsequious timber-merchant, was still more vulgarly devoted to royalty than the giddy woman herself, and consequently the royal family were spared the public scandal and disgrace, which must necessarily have attended a second judicial investigation.†

While these unhappy proceedings were still furnishing the public with food for gossip, the world was suddenly startled by an announcement in the public journals that his Majesty's brother, the Duke of Cumberland, had given his hand at the altar to Anne widow of Christopher Horton, Esquire, of Catton in Derbyshire, and daughter of Simon Lord Irnham, afterwards Earl of Carhampton.‡ This

* "Celebrated Trials," vol. iv. pp. 481—9. London 1825.

† Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iv. pp. 356—7.

‡ The marriage took place on the night of the 2nd of October 1771, at the lady's residence in Hertford Street, May Fair. The proofs of the marriage, obtained by order of the King in May 1773, are preserved in the Privy Council office, where the author had the opportunity of inspecting them. The only document of any interest is their joint declaration that they were man and wife, signed by the Duke and Duchess on the night of their nuptials, and attested by the clergyman who united them. The signature of the Duke, "Henry Frederick," is traced in singularly tremulous characters, while nothing can be neater or steadier than that of the Duchess.

event, which, under any circumstances whatever, would have been a severe blow to the King, was rendered the more distressing in consequence of the Princess Dowager, at the time, being supposed to be at the point of death, and also from the circumstance that the first intelligence which the King received of his brother's marriage was through no less heartless and disrespectful a channel, than an off-hand letter addressed to him by the Duke from an hotel at Calais. The King, publicly and at once, manifested his marked displeasure at his brother's conduct. To the foreign Ministers he caused it to be privately intimated that their abstaining from exchanging further civilities with Cumberland House would be regarded as an acceptable concession by the King; while the fashionable world received notice, through the medium of the Lord Chamberlain, that such persons as might choose to wait upon the Duke and Duchess must no longer expect to be received at St. James's.* On the other hand, the King not only allowed his brother to retain his equerries and the other appanages of a Prince of the Blood, but even permitted him to keep his Rangership of Windsor Great Park, notwithstanding the near vicinity of the Ranger's Lodge to Windsor Castle must entail the constant chance of his encountering the Duke or Duchess in his rides.

As for the new Duchess, although a finished coquette, and having more the appearance of a woman of pleasure than of a lady of distinguished position, her conduct as a wife and a mother appears to have been unexceptionable. "The new Princess of the Blood," writes Walpole to Sir Horace Mann on the 7th of November 1771,—"is a young widow of twenty-four, extremely pretty, not handsome, very well made, with the most amorous eyes

* At a chapter of the Order of the Garter, held on the 18th of June the following year, we find that the Duke was the only Knight who received no summons to be present. *Annual Register for* 1772, p. 110.

in the world, and eyelashes a yard long; coquette beyond measure, artful as Cleopatra, and completely mistress of all her passions and projects. Indeed, eyelashes three-quarters of a yard shorter would have served to conquer such a head as she has turned." * Again, Walpole thus describes the Duchess in his memoirs of the reign of George the Third;†—"There was something so bewitching in her languishing eyes, which she could animate to enchantment if she pleased, and her coquetry was so active, so varied, and yet so habitual, that it was difficult not to see through it, and yet as difficult to resist it. She danced divinely, and had a great deal of wit, but of the satiric kind; and as she had haughtiness before her rise, no wonder she claimed all the observance due to her rank, after she became Duchess of Cumberland."

What remains to be told of the Duke of Cumberland may be very briefly related. His married life was not a happy one. Avoided by his royal relatives and neglected by the world, his society, during the later years of his life, seems to have been almost entirely confined to the kinspeople of his Duchess, and a few associates whose tastes and habits were congenial to his own. No single individual of high rank and character appears to have countenanced him. Even the most violent members of the Opposition shunned rather than courted his acquaintance.‡ The Duke expired on the 18th September 1790, in the forty-fifth year of his age.

* Walpole's Letters, vol. v. pp. 5, 347. Edition 1857.

† Vol. iv. p. 357.

‡ "Here are two anecdotes," writes a contemporary, "of the *wise* Duke of Cumberland which most likely you have never heard. One came from Sir Joshua Reynolds himself. The Duchess of Cumberland was sitting for her picture. The Duke came in; tumbled about the room in his awkward manner, without speaking to Sir Joshua. The Duchess thought it too bad, and whispered to him her opinion; upon which he came, and, leaning on Sir Joshua's chair while he was painting, said—'What! you always begin with the head first, do you?' And once when, at his own public day, he was told he ought to say something to Mr. Gibbon, the author—'So,' says he, 'I suppose you are at the old trade again—scribble, scribble, scribble?' I should think, with such pretty witty sayings, his royal highness must be very entertaining." *Auckland Corresp.*, vol. ii. pp. 280—1.

A second clandestine marriage in the royal family, which also occasioned great distress to the King, was that of another of his younger brothers, the Duke of Gloucester, with Maria, an illegitimate daughter of Sir Edward Walpole, and widow of James second Earl of Waldegrave.*

William Henry Duke of Gloucester, third son of Frederick Prince of Wales, was born at Leicester House on the 25th of November 1743. As he was one of the least intelligent and promising of the numerous offspring of the Princess Dowager, so also was he the one least beloved and the least tenderly treated by his mother. According to Walpole, she used to cause him great distress at times, by jeering him on account of his dullness, in the presence of his brothers and sisters; on one particular occasion telling them "to laugh at the fool." The sensitive child held down his head and said nothing; on which the Princess changed her tone and accused him of sulkiness. "No," he said, "he was not sulky; he was only thinking." "And, pray, what are you thinking of?" inquired the Princess with increasing scorn in her manner. "I was thinking," said the poor child, "what I should feel if I had a son as unhappy as you make me."

George the Third and the Duke of Gloucester had not only been firm allies and friends in childhood and in boyhood, but, up to the time that the latter allowed the fact of his ill-assorted union with Lady Waldegrave to transpire, the King had loved him more than any other of his brothers. Between their several characters there were striking resemblances. In their boyhood each had manifested that serious, reserved, and pious disposition which, happily preserved them from plunging into those youthful irregu-

* Sir Edward Walpole, K.B., was the second son of the celebrated Minister. He was the father of two other illegitimate daughters, of whom one became the wife of Lionel fifth Earl of Dysart, and the other married the Honourable Frederick Keppel, Bishop of Exeter, fifth son of William Anne, second Earl of Albemarle.

larities, which subsequently disgraced the careers of their brothers, the Dukes of York and Cumberland. Each had suffered from the effects of a faulty education; each, on reaching manhood, had happily had the sagacity to appreciate the grievous disadvantage which it imposed upon them, and each, by diligent study, had endeavoured to make up for the faults and deficiencies of the past.

It should be remembered that, at the time when the Duke of Gloucester first conceived his violent passion for the beautiful widow whom he made his wife, he had not only the excuse of having but just emerged from boyhood, but that the remarkable woman, who had enslaved him was, in point of personal charms and grace and dignity, perhaps the most captivating and commanding beauty of her day. Many worshippers, at the time, were at her feet, and among them the Duke of Portland, the best match in England with the exception of the Princes of the Blood. Ambitious, she is said to have been, and also haughty; especially in her intercourse with her own sex. This latter imperfection, however, was in all probability, induced by the false position in which she stood as the daughter of a milliner on the one hand, and, on the other hand, as the widow of an Earl and the granddaughter of a great Minister. In other respects, Lady Waldegrave seems to have possessed all those endearing and engaging qualities which were calculated to fix the admiration and affections of a husband, and to render her idolized by her children. Lord Waldegrave, whom she had married in her girlhood, had been distinguished by many of the highest qualities of the head and heart; but was unprepossessing in person, and old enough to be her father. When he left her a widow she was not only still young and beautiful, but her face is said to have retained all the bloom and freshness of early youth. Unhesitatingly rejecting the hand of the Duke of Portland, we find her carrying on a long and unsatisfactory dalliance with the

Duke of Gloucester, a course of conduct which was alike calculated to give birth to the sneers of the envious and the prudish, and to create uneasiness in the minds of her relatives and friends. Unlikely, indeed, it appeared to be that the widow of an Earl, and a woman of great virtue and pride, should stoop to form a dishonourable connexion; yet, on the other hand, the chances of the milliner's daughter becoming the sister-in-law of the reigning sovereign, seemed to be quite as improbable and remote.

It was at this juncture, that, at the recommendation of her uncle Horace Walpole, and with the approbation of her father, Lady Waldegrave addressed a letter to her royal lover, in which, after having pointed out the indifferent repute which his attentions were calculated to entail upon her, she renounced his friendship on the double plea that she was too considerable a person to become his mistress, and of too little consideration to become his wife. Whatever may have been the result of this communication, it was not only kept a secret from her relatives, but even the entreaties of a father failed in eliciting any information from her on the subject. "A short fortnight," writes Horace Walpole, "baffled all my prudence. The Prince renewed his visits with more assiduity, after that little interval, and Lady Waldegrave received him without disguise. My part was taken. I had done my duty. A second attempt had been hopeless folly."*

From this time, year after year passed away, yet the Duke was still ever at the side of the beautiful widow; nor does she seem to have made any further objections to his attentions. Whether they were married was a question on which the world was divided in opinion; but at all events it was evident that they mutually wished that it

* Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 402–8.

should be thought they were man and wife. The Duke's manner towards her was marked by the most respectful attention. The livery worn by her servants was a compromise between that of the royal family and her own. When she appeared in public the gentlemen of the Duke's household escorted her to her carriage or her chair; and, moreover, at a magnificent masquerade which took place in Mrs. Cornellys's rooms in Soho Square, on the 26th of February 1770, they seemed desirous of proclaiming the nature of their connexion to the world, by the Duke appearing in the character of Edward the Fourth, and Lady Waldegrave as Elizabeth Woodville; the latter being habited in grey and pearls, with a black veil. "Methinks," writes Horace Walpole, "it was not very difficult to find out the meaning of these masks." *

The fact is, that although the union between the Duke and Lady Waldegrave was not communicated by her to her family till the month of June 1772, their marriage had taken place so far back as the 6th of September 1766.† The King, as we have seen, was greatly grieved and annoyed at his brother's conduct. Nevertheless, as the issue of the marriage must necessarily come within the line of succession to the throne, his Majesty deputed the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, and the Bishop of London, to inquire into the validity of the ceremony, and to cause such

* Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 227. Edition 1857.

† The birth of the Princess Sophia Matilda took place on the 29th of May 1773. The earliest notice which we discover of the Duke's passion for Lady Waldegrave occurs in the winter of 1764, when he was only nineteen: consequently it was not till after a dalliance of nearly two years that she became his wife. "The Duke of Gloucester," writes Gilly Williams to George Selwyn in December 1764, "has professed a passion for the Dowager Waldegrave. He is never from her elbow. This flatters Horry Walpole not a little, though he pretends to dislike it." *Selwyn Corresp.*, vol. i. p. 334. It was not till late in the year 1772 that the Duke thought proper to make a formal communication of his marriage to the royal family. "*Sept.* 16. The Duke of Gloucester notified to the King his marriage with my niece Lady Waldegrave." *Walpole's "Short Notes of his Life:" Letters*, vol. i. p. lxxvii. *preface.* See also letters from Walpole to Sir H. Mann, dated severally 8 May 1771 and 15 June 1772.

corroborative evidence, as they could procure, to be entered on the books of the Privy Council. True it was that no witnesses had been present at the marriage of the Duke and Lady Waldegrave, and accordingly the envious of her sex, when they clamorously denied her right to be regarded as a wedded wife, had some excuse for their scepticism. In the last century, however, the solemn affirmation of two persons, made before credible witnesses, was considered as sufficient evidence that a marriage had taken place. In the present instance, the Duke, when believing himself to be on his death-bed, at Florence, had devoutly entrusted the secret of his marriage to the two Grooms of his Bedchamber, Colonels Rainsford and Heywood; while the Duchess, on her part, had formerly made a similar disclosure, though under less solemn circumstances, to her brother-in-law, Frederick Keppel, Bishop of Exeter. Attestations on oath to this effect were made by the several persons referred to, but, as Walpole observes, envy is no lawyer. "The Duke," writes Walpole to Mann, "was advised to be married again with the King's consent, but he had too much sense to take such silly counsel, though the King would have allowed it. The Duke, however, submitted to the King's pleasure, if it should be thought necessary, though fully satisfied himself with the validity. The King sent him word by the Archbishop, that as his Royal Highness was satisfied, and as his Majesty had heard no objection to the validity, he did not think any further steps necessary. In fact, the noise of those who repine at the Duchess's exaltation is a proof that they are convinced her marriage is indissoluble." *

But though the King was convinced of the legality of the marriage, it was long before he could be induced to extend his thorough forgiveness to his favourite brother. Certainly,

* Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 468, edition 1857; and MS. documents in proof of the marriage preserved in the Privy Council Office.

so late as the month of January 1774, no reconciliation had taken place between them, inasmuch as, in that month, we find Walpole suggesting to the Duchess the means which he considered most likely to effect so desirable a result. Still later, in 1775, we find the King positively refusing to make any provision for his brother's children. To Lord North he writes on the 15th of January—"I cannot deny that on the subject of this Duke my heart is wounded: I have ever loved him with the fondness one bears to a child." In the same letter, the King speaks of his brother's marriage as a "highly disgraceful step," and of the Duchess with much acrimony. "I never can," he writes, "think of placing her in a situation to answer her extreme pride and vanity." * Again, we find him observing to Lord Hertford that he could not receive her at Court "without affronting all the sovereigns of Europe by countenancing a *mésalliance*." † Time, however, produced the desired effect. The conduct of the Duke and Duchess, as well as that of their two children, Prince William and the Princess Sophia, proved so eminently irreproachable, that the King was at last induced to relent, and from that time behaved with the greatest kindness and generosity towards his brother's family. ‡

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 87. Edition 1858.

† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 415. To the last, the King seems to have been convinced that his weak though amiable brother had been entrapped into marriage by Lord Waldegrave's ambitious widow; indeed the fact, that at the time of their union she was already the mother of three children, and consequently several years older than the Duke, renders the King's prejudices very far from being unreasonable ones. To Lord North the King writes on the 29th of November 1777—"I should have thought the handsome proposal delivered by you to the Duke of Gloucester would have deserved at least the civility of not applying for a public provision for a person *who must always be odious to me.*" *Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol. i. p. 100.

‡ Memoirs of George 3, vol. iii. p. 408, and note. A Bill was subsequently passed (Act 12 George 3, c. 11), which precluded any member of the royal family from contracting marriage under the age of twenty-five without the permission of the sovereign, nor after that age, until twelve months' notice should have been given to the Privy Council, and provided that both houses of Parliament should not have expressly declared their disapprobation within the twelve months.

One of the most remarkable events which distinguished the year 1772—affecting, as it did, the singular fortunes of the youngest and fairest of the King's sisters—the Queen of Denmark, was the memorable revolution which then took place in that country. Caroline Matilda, the posthumous child of Frederick Prince of Wales, was born on the 11th of July 1751, and, on the 1st of October 1766, at the age of fifteen, had the misfortune to become the wife of Christian the Seventh, King of Denmark. Her contemporaries describe her as a tall, fair, graceful creature; amiable and charitable in her disposition, refined in her manners, and possessed of a vivacity which rendered her society eminently agreeable. Her abilities and accomplishments, moreover, were far above the ordinary average. She conversed with facility in the French, German, Italian, and Danish languages; she delighted in music and books; her horsemanship was the admiration of the ladies of Denmark, and, lastly, we are assured that she danced the "finest minuet" at her husband's court.*

Such was the charming Princess who, while still almost a child, was torn from a circle that idolized her, to become the wife of a selfish and dissolute tyrant! The people of England watched her departure from their shores not only with an affectionate interest, but with apprehensions which unhappily turned out to be only too well-founded. "The poor Queen of Denmark," writes Miss Talbot to Mrs. Carter on the 4th of October 1766—"is gone out alone into the wide world; not a creature she knows to attend her any further than Altona. It is worse than dying; for die she must to all she has ever seen or known; but then it is only dying out of one bad world into another just like it, and where she is to have cares and fears, and dangers and sorrows, that will all yet be new to her. May it please

* Annual Register for 1775. Part 2, p. 2.

God to protect, and instruct and comfort her, poor child as she is! and make her as good, as beloved, and as happy, as I believe her Aunt Louisa* was! They have just been telling me how bitterly she cried in the coach, as far as anybody saw her." † It was a complaint of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who painted her portrait before her departure from England, that in consequence of her being constantly in tears whenever she sat to him, he found it difficult to do justice either to his original or to himself.‡

A stranger in a foreign land, and linked to a man who had conceived an aversion for her almost from the hour of their marriage, the situation of the young Queen was indeed little to be envied. The low amours in which her husband indulged—either with a "Katherine of the beautiful feet," or some other pretty demirep who infatuated him for the hour — added greatly to the discomfort and degradation which became her lot. She had continued in this isolated state for nearly two years, and, in the mean time, had given birth to an heir to the throne of Denmark, when her unworthy consort thought proper to quit his dominions, for the purpose of paying a prolonged and unprofitable visit to England and other countries.§ Relieved from his unwelcome

* Louisa, fifth and youngest daughter of George II. In addition to strong sense and considerable personal beauty, she possessed many endearing qualities, which rendered her almost as great a favourite with the nation, as she was beloved in her own family. From her childhood, it is said to have been her ambition to become Queen of Denmark; a desire which she lived to have gratified. On the 30th of November 1743, she was united to Frederick, Prince Royal of Denmark, and, three years afterwards, was elevated to the throne which she had sighed for in the nursery. Before quitting England, she had observed to her brother, the Duke of Cumberland, "If I am unhappy, my relations shall never know it." Her married life, owing to the infidelities of her husband, was not a happy one, and her end was terrible. Her death, like that of her mother, Queen Caroline, was occasioned by a rupture, which, from mistaken feelings of delicacy, she had long concealed. Her mother, on her death-bed, had observed to her;—"Louisa, remember, I die by being giddy and obstinate, and keeping my disorder a secret." After undergoing an operation which lasted an hour, and enduring excruciating agonies, she expired on the 8th December 1751, the day after she had completed her twenty-seventh year.

† Mrs. Carter's Letters, vol. iii. p. 146.

‡ Northcote's Memoirs of Sir J. Reynolds, vol. i. p. 156.

§ See ante, vol. i. p. 450, *et sequent.*

society, the young Queen devoted herself to a life of retirement; employing her time in attending to her maternal duties; in visiting the cottages of the poor, and, at the same time, winning the hearts of thousands by the charm of her manner, her kindness, and her affability.* The return, however, of the King to Denmark appears to have wrought a complete revolution in the character and habits of Caroline Matilda. He returned, not only more confirmed than ever in his addiction to low society and loose amours, but unhappily he also rendered his Queen a sufferer from the effects of his incontinency, in a manner which no woman of ordinary spirit could be expected to forget, nor perhaps even to forgive. † From this time her manners not only gradually grew forward but even bold. She began to indulge in levities which, if not criminal, were in the highest degree imprudent. Public opinion seems to have been set recklessly by her at defiance. In habits, in temper, and in principles she became entirely changed. Among other acts of rashness and folly, she gave great offence to the graver Danish matrons by not only appearing frequently in public in male attire, but by riding in that costume astride like a man. ‡ "An abominable riding-habit," writes Sir Robert Keith, "with a black slouched hat has been almost universally introduced here, which gives every woman the air of an awkward *postilion*. In all the time I have been in Denmark I never saw the Queen out in any other garb." §

In the mean time, in consequence of Christian the Seventh having reduced himself by his continued irregularities to the most miserable state of prostration both of mind and body, it was only to be expected that his young and high-spirited consort should alike take an interest in and seek to acquire

* Brown's "Northern Courts," vol. i. pp. 73, 74.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. pp. 82, 83.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. pp. 103, 104.

§ Memoirs and Correspondence of Sir Robert Murray Keith, vol. i. p. 196, *note*. Sir Robert, then Colonel Keith, was at this time British Minister at Copenhagen.

an influence over the affairs of her husband's kingdom. In this attempt, however, she was stealthily and doggedly opposed by her bitter enemy, Juliana Maria, Queen Dowager of Denmark, whose object it was to secure the succession to the throne for her younger son, Prince Frederick, and who consequently seized every opportunity of prejudicing the enervated Christian, as well as the Danish people in general, against the rival whom she was bent upon ruining. Already the mental imbecility of Christian, and the increasing unpopularity of the aspiring favourites to whose hands he had confided the reins of Government, had gone far to assist the designs of that scheming and relentless woman. It wanted but some plausible evidence of conjugal unfaithfulness on the part of Caroline Matilda, in order to complete her destruction, and such evidence, as we shall presently see, the unhappy Princess appeared to be bent upon affording.

The Danish monarch, during his recent travels, had encountered at Ahrensburg, near Hamburg, a physician of plebeian parentage of the name of John Frederick Struensee, a young man possessed of considerable personal beauty, of insinuating manners and engaging address, and of abilities almost of a high order. Struensee had risen rapidly in royal favour, and in due time had raised himself to be Prime Minister of Denmark. Unhappily, from the accident of Struensee having been formerly professionally consulted by Caroline Matilda under circumstances of peculiar delicacy, he had been afforded the means of gaining the confidence of a young and warm-blooded Queen who, on account of the brutal treatment which she had experienced from a worthless husband, was only well disposed to listen to words of sympathy and devotion from the lips of another. Accordingly she conceived a passion for the insinuating adventurer which seems to have been reciprocal, and which neither of the reckless couple apparently took much pains to conceal. How complete was the infatuation of the

youthful Queen may be gleaned from the following curious extract from the Memoirs of the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel. The scene which he describes took place in Gottorp Castle in the town of Schleswig. "The King's dinner was dull. The Queen afterwards played at Quinze. I was placed on her right; Struensee on her left. Brandt, a new arrival, and Warnstedt, a chamberlain, completed the party. I hardly like to describe Struensee's behaviour and the remarks he openly dared to address to the Queen while leaning his arm on the table close to her. 'Well! why don't you play?'—'Can't you hear?'——'*Nun spielen Sie doch, haben Sie nicht gehört?*'—I confess my heart was broken to see this Princess, endowed with so much sense and good qualities, fallen to such a point and into such bad hands." *

The rapid and unmerited rise of the plebeian Struensee naturally gave great offence to the Danish nobles, and consequently tended to strengthen the party of the Queen Dowager. Moreover, the flagrant gallantries of an obscure foreigner with the consort of their Sovereign, and a belief which had gained ground that he was equally dear both to the King and Queen, had given rise to many scandalous reports. † Prints were publicly exposed for sale in the shop-windows of the streets of Copenhagen, representing the Queen and her presumed paramour in attitudes of the grossest impropriety. Under these and other circumstances, a conspiracy was formed, under the auspices of Juliana Maria, for seizing the persons of the Queen and Struensee, as well as that of his friend and confederate, Enevold Brandt, a young man of pleasure, of good birth, and of chivalrous courage. Accordingly, on a dark winter morning,‡ after a magnificent

* Life of Caroline Matilda, Queen of Denmark, by Sir C. F. Lascelles Wraxall, Bart., vol. i. p. 233.

† See Gibbon's Letters to Lord Sheffield: *Miscellaneous Works*, pp. 243—5, Edition, 1837; and Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iv. pp. 163, 280, 281.

‡ January 17, 1772.

masked ball in the palace of Copenhagen at which friend and foe had intermingled with apparently more than ordinary gaiety, the conspirators proceeded to carry their daring project into execution. The guests had dispersed in their motley costumes to their respective homes. The ball-room lights had been for some time extinguished. The young Queen, whose high spirits during the evening had been the subject of remark, had danced the last dance in which she was destined to press the hand of Struensee. Each had sunk to rest in the several apartments occupied by them in the palace, when suddenly Caroline Matilda was awoke by one of the ladies of her bedchamber, who came to communicate to her the King's commands that she should instantly depart for one of his palaces in the country. Any attempt to escape, either by flight or resistance, had been rendered of no avail. Every outlet from the palace had been carefully sentinelled by the royal Guards. The vehicle which was to convey the Queen to durance, perhaps to the scaffold, was in attendance almost beneath her windows. In the mean time, a revolution, as sudden as it proved to be successful, had been boldly and artfully accomplished. Struensee and Brandt, after having been seized by detachments of the Guards, and loaded hand and foot with fetters, were flung into different prison-rooms in the citadel. To obtain access to the King, and to endeavour, by her tears and entreaties, to induce him to revoke his edict, appeared to be the only hope for the unhappy Queen. Accordingly, she rushed in her night-dress to the apartment of her half-idiotic consort, but meeting her enemy, Count Rantzau, President of the War Office, in the antechamber, a sense of decorum induced her to return to her closet, where she hurried on the first garment which she found at hand. When she again entered the antechamber of her husband, it was too late. She succeeded indeed, in spite of the opposition of an officer and two soldiers who crossed

their fire-arms at the doors, in forcing her way into the apartment, but, in the mean time, the King had been induced by the conspirators to retire to a distant part of the palace. On her return to her sleeping-room, she was encountered by Count Rantzau, Count Eichstadt, and other officers, from whom she received neither pity nor consideration. If anything, indeed, could have strengthened their resolution, it must have been the sight of Struensee's white bear-skin cloak, which lay in her apartment, and which clearly indicated that he must have followed her thither after the ball.* Bearing in her arms her second child, an infant daughter of only six months old,† the unhappy Queen was hurried into the travelling-carriage which awaited her, and in which an officer, with a drawn sword, took his seat by her side. Her destination was the castle of Cronenburg, or Kronborg, a palatial fortress about twenty-four miles distant from Copenhagen, in which, for the next four months, she was left to bewail her misfortunes, and to speculate on the fate which her enemies might have in store for her. In the mean time, under circumstances of the most disgusting and horrifying barbarity, Struensee and Brandt had ended their lives upon the scaffold. The former, before having been brought to trial, had made a formal confession of the criminal nature of his intercourse with the Queen; a confession to which Caroline Matilda herself was subsequently induced to subscribe.

In England, the Danish Revolution, associated as it was with the misfortunes and misconduct of a British Princess, created an extraordinary sensation. On the 28th February, 1772, Mrs. Carter writes to Mrs. Vesey—"I have very little intelligence to send you from Denmark, as there is a profound silence at St. James's on that subject. You know

* "Northern Courts," vol. i. p. 127.

† Louisa Augusta, born 7 July 1771, became the mother of Christian Augustus Duke of Augustenburg.

that the unhappy young Queen is imprisoned in a castle dashed by the waves, where she is kept in very strict confinement. I am persuaded you would think it an alleviation of her misfortunes, if I could tell you it is the very castle once haunted by Hamlet's ghost, but of this I have no positive assurance; though, as it is at Elsineur, I think such an imagination as your's and mine may fairly enough make out the rest. * In the letter, which the King of Denmark wrote to our's, he only mentioned, in general terms, that the Queen had behaved in a manner which obliged him to imprison her, but that from regard to his Majesty her life should be safe." † We learn from Archdeacon Coxe, that, during the imprisonment of Caroline Matilda at Cronenburg, she occupied the apartments of the Governor of the castle, with permission to walk on the side batteries, and on the leads of the tower. ‡

But for the spirited interposition of the British Government, and the prompt orders issued for the sailing of a powerful British squadron to the Baltic, the young Queen in all probability might have shared the fate of Struensee and Brandt. § Articles had already been framed against her, with a view to bastardising her children, and possibly of bringing her to the scaffold, when the British Minister at the Court of Denmark, Sir Robert Keith, entered her apartment, and informed her that she was not only free, but that a vessel was waiting to carry her from the shores of Denmark. So overcome was she by the joyful intelligence, as to burst into a flood of tears; at the same time embracing Sir Robert Keith and blessing him as her deliverer. When informed, however, that she must part with the infant, which

* See *Archdeacon Coxe's Travels in Poland, Russia, Denmark, &c.*, vol. v. pp. 115, 116. Fourth Edition.

† Mrs. Carter's Letters, vol. iv. p. 50.

‡ Archdeacon Coxe's Travels, vol. v. p. 112.

§ See the Earl of Suffolk's despatch to Sir Robert Keith dated May 1st, 1772, printed in the Memoirs and Correspondence of Sir R. M. Keith, vol. i. p. 286.

had been her sole comfort during her misery, and which she had herself nursed at her breast, her anguish knew no bounds. "For some time," writes Archdeacon Coxe, "she could not be prevailed upon to bid a final adieu. At length, after bestowing repeated caresses upon this darling object of affection, she retired to the vessel in an agony of despair. She remained on deck, her eyes immovably directed toward the palace of Cronenburg, which contained the child that had been so long her only comfort, until darkness intercepted the view. The vessel having made but little way during the night, at daybreak she observed with fond satisfaction that the palace was still visible, and could not be persuaded to enter the cabin so long as she could discover the faintest glimpse of the battlements." *

From Cronenburg the young Queen was escorted, by a British squadron, to Stade in Hanover, from whence she was afterwards removed to the castle of Zell, or Celle, not far from the moated ducal seat of Alden, which, half a century before, had been the scene of the captivity and death of another beautiful and injured Princess, her great-grandmother, the ill-fated Princess Sophia Dorothea, consort of George the First. In the Castle of Zell, provided with a suitable household, and surrounded by a small court of which she was the idol, Caroline Matilda passed the remainder of her brief and unhappy existence. Her heart is said to have been a prey to the deepest despondency, although in society she assumed a cheerfulness to which she had long been a stranger. Overwhelming, however, as were her misfortunes, and painful as had been the circumstances of indignity under which she had been driven from the Court of Denmark, she ever spoke of her enemies without resentment, and, without regret, of the crown which she had lost. The great grief which embittered her existence

* Coxe's Travels, vol. v. pp. 113, 114.

was her separation from her offspring. "She retained," continues Coxe, "to her last moments, the most unaffected attachment to her children in Denmark. With all the anxiety of a parent, she made repeated enquiries after them, and was delighted with receiving the minutest accounts of their health, amusements, and education. Having obtained their portraits from Copenhagen, she placed them in her most retired apartment; often apostrophized them as if they were present, and addressed them in the tenderest manner." *

Sir Nathaniel Wraxall—who was deeply engaged in a plot to restore Caroline Matilda to her husband's throne, and who, in consequence, was admitted to more than one clandestine interview with her—has left us an interesting account both of Zell and of its unhappy occupant. "There was," he writes, "in the aspect of the castle of Zell, its towers, moats, drawbridge, long galleries, and Gothic features, all the scenery realizing the descriptions of fortresses where imprisoned princesses were detained in bondage." It was in one of the apartments of this gloomy fortress, that Wraxall, through the instrumentality of the Baron de Seckendorf, one of the chamberlains of the young Queen, and with the agency of her confidential *valet de chambre*, Mantel, was admitted to his first secret interview with the royal exile. On the night of the 17th of February 1775, he privately took up his abode in an obscure inn in the suburbs of Zell, where he anxiously awaited a reply to certain secret despatches, which he had found means to have conveyed into the hands of the young Queen. "On the ensuing morning," he writes, "I acquainted Seckendorf that I was returned to my concealment at the inn in the suburbs. He received me with testimonies of joy, and assured me that the Queen's impatience to

* Coxe's Travels, vol. v. p. 115. "I received this anecdote," writes Archdeacon Coxe, "from a person at Zell who had more than once overheard this affecting scene."

converse with me, on the subject of my mission to England, would not allow her to postpone it beyond the same afternoon."—"According to the directions," adds Wraxall, "given me by Seckendorf, I quitted the 'Sand Krug,' on hearing the castle-clock strike the hour of four, wrapped in my great coat, and walked to the drawbridge. In the great quadrangle I found Mantel. He led me nearly round the castle, through private passages; and, opening the door of a room into which he admitted me, he left me alone. It was a spacious apartment, the windows of which commanded a view over the gardens of the castle; and I had scarcely leisure to cast my eye round, when the Queen entered without any attendant. My interview with her lasted till near a quarter past six, during all which time we stood in the embrasure of one of the windows. As I had then an opportunity of closely examining her countenance and person, it being broad daylight, I shall add a few words on that subject. Her charms consisted principally in her youth and *embonpoint*. Like the King, her brother, she betrayed a hurry in her articulation, when agitated or eager; but which peculiarity rather augmented, than diminished, her attractions. Her manners were very ingratiating—noble, yet calculated to win those who approached her. Indeed, towards me, who was engaged, at the hazard of my life, in endeavours to replace her on the throne, it was natural that she should express much good-will and condescension." *

On the 22nd of March 1775, Wraxall, furnished with fresh credentials, paid another and last visit to Zell. On this occasion he was smuggled into the castle at night. "I set out," he writes, "before eight, at which hour Mantel engaged to meet me. The weather was most tempestuous, accompanied with rain, and such darkness as rendered it difficult to discern any object. When I got to the draw-

* Wraxall's Posthumous Memoirs of his own Time, vol. i. pp. 398—400.

bridge, no valet appeared; and a few moments afterwards the guard, being relieved, passed close to me. Wrapped in my great coat, I waited, not without considerable anxiety. At length Mantel arrived. He said not a word, but, covering me all over with his large German cloak, and holding an umbrella over our heads, he led me in silence through the arch, into the area of the castle, from whence he conducted me to the Queen's library. There he left me, exhorting me to patience, it being uncertain at what hour her Majesty would quit her company. The room was lighted up, and the book-cases opened. In about thirty minutes the Queen entered the apartment. She was elegantly dressed in crimson satin, and either had, or impressed me as having, an air of majesty, mingled with condescension, altogether unlike an ordinary woman of condition. Our interview lasted nearly two hours."—"When ready to leave me," adds Wraxall, "she opened the door, but retained it a minute in her hand, as if willing to protract her stay. She never perhaps looked more engaging than on that night, in that attitude, and in that dress. Her countenance, animated with the prospect of her approaching emancipation from Zell—which was in fact only a refuge and an exile—and anticipating her restoration to the throne of Denmark, was lighted up with smiles, and she appeared to be in the highest health. Yet, if futurity could have been unveiled to us, we should have seen behind the door, which she held in her hands, the 'fell anatomy,' as 'Constance' calls him, already raising his dart to strike her. Within seven weeks from that day she yielded her last breath." *

Charitable as Caroline Matilda was to the poor, and kind, considerate, and affable, as she was, to every one who

* Posthumous Memoirs, vol. i. pp. 405—8.

"Then with a passion would I shake the world,
And rouse from sleep that fell anatomy."

King John. Act. 3. Sc. 4.

approached her person, it was only natural that her unexpected and alarming illness should create a deep sensation at the small court of which she was the idolized mistress. In the earlier stages, however, of her malady, she alone appears to have entertained a presentiment that her end was approaching. "Since the month of October," she observed to her physician Leyser, "you have twice extricated me from very dangerous indispositions, but this exceeds your skill. I know I am not within the help of medicine."* So great became the violence of her disorder, that her pulse beat one hundred and thirty-one strokes to the minute, and before she expired it was found impossible to count them. Yet, notwithstanding her sufferings, which were excruciating, she manifested a patience, and a solicitude for the ladies who tended her, which endeared her still more to those who survived her. She preserved her senses and speech to the last; expressing, almost with her dying breath, her complete forgiveness of those by whom she had been persecuted and calumniated.†

Thus, on the 10th of May 1775, at the early age of twenty-three, died Queen Caroline Matilda, the fair and high-spirited sister of George the Third. Her remains rest in the great church at Zell, in the same vault, and side by side, with those of the no less accomplished and unfortunate Princess, her ancestress, Sophia Dorothea. ‡

A few words only remain to be said, in regard to the nature of the intercourse which existed between Caroline Matilda and Struensee. Notwithstanding the powerful evidence of criminality which exists, there have been persons who strenuously and chivalrously maintain the innocence of the ill-fated wife of Christian the Seventh. For instance, conclusive as the confession of Struensee would seem to be, it has been argued that his nature

* Annual Register for 1775, Part 2, p. 4. † *Ibid.*

‡ Wraxall's Memoirs of the Courts of Berlin, &c., vol. i. p. 45. Third Edition.

was notoriously pusillanimous, and consequently that, in all probability, his asseveration of the Queen's guilt had been wrung from him, either by the fear of torture, or in the expectation of saving his life. But the admission, made by Struensee in his prison-room, he had afterwards ample opportunity of retracting on the scaffold, and of that opportunity he failed to avail himself. He died, be it remembered, a penitent and self-abasing Christian, and accordingly, when the awful moment arrived, in which persistence in a hideous lie could avail him nothing in this world, and threatened him with eternal punishment in the next, it seems inconceivable that he should have allowed himself to pass to the presence of his Maker, without having made some atonement to an innocent woman whom he had cruelly and basely maligned, and whom his continued reserve would in all probability involve in his fate? On the contrary, to the excellent clergyman, Dr. Munter, who attended him to the last, he more than once solemnly insisted upon the truth of his former statements. *

But, though we may be unwilling to give credence to most of the pleas adduced by the apologists of Caroline Matilda, there is one, it must be admitted, which, resting as it does on the authority of M. Roques, who, as pastor of the French Protestant Church at Zell, attended the Queen on

* Dr. Munter, shortly after Struensee's execution, published an account of his conversion to Christianity, in a Narrative to which Sir James Mackintosh awards high praise, as "a perfect model of the manner in which a person circumstanced like Struensee, ought to be treated by a kind and considerate Minister of religion." *Sir J. Mackintosh's Misc. Works*, vol. ii. p. 397. The "Narrative" was reprinted by the learned and Reverend Thomas Rennell, B.D., F.R.S., in 1824. It has been suggested by Sir James Mackintosh, that "as Dr. Munter's narrative was published under the eye of the Queen's oppressors, they might have caused the confessions of Struensee to be inserted in it by their own agents, without the consent, perhaps without the knowledge, of Munter." Immediately afterwards, however, the charitable assumption is half demolished. "It must be confessed," adds Sir James, "that internal evidence does not favour this hypothesis, for the passages of the Narrative, which contain the avowals of Struensee, have a striking appearance of genuineness." *Misc. Works*, vol. ii. p. 400. See Dr. Munter's "Narrative of the Conversion and Death of Count Struensee; Printed for C. and J. Rivington;" 2nd Edition, 1825.

her deathbed, is certainly deserving of respectful consideration. "Almost every day," said M. Roques, "Queen Matilda used to send for me to read or converse with her, or still oftener to consult me respecting the poor of my district, whom she desired to relieve. During the last days of her life, I became still more assiduous in my visits, and I was with her till just before she drew her last breath. Though very feeble in body, she had preserved all her presence of mind. After I had recited to her the prayer for the dying, 'M. Roques,' said she, in a voice that seemed to recover strength in the effort, 'I am going to appear before God. I now protest that I am innocent of the guilt imputed to me, and that I never was unfaithful to my husband.' In all my conversations with the Queen, she had never, until that moment, alluded in the most distant manner to the charges brought against her." * In addition to this remarkable statement, no slight interest was excited, a year or two since, by the publication of a letter, purporting to have been written by Caroline Matilda, in her dying hours, to her brother, King George the Third, containing the most solemn asseverations of her innocence. "Oh!" the letter proceeds, "that it might please the Almighty to convince the world, after my death, that I did not deserve any of the frightful accusations by which the calumnies of my enemies stained my character, wounded my heart, traduced my honour, and trampled on my dignity. Sire! believe your dying sister—a Queen, and even more, a Christian—who would gaze with terror on the other world, if her last confession were a falsehood. I die willingly; for the unhappy bless the tomb." †

* Memoires de M. Falckenskiold, Officier Général dans le Service de S. M. Danoise, p. 235, quoted by Earl Stanhope in his Hist. of England, vol. v. p. 467. Falckenskiold, who was involved in the ruin of Struensee, and who in consequence suffered four years' imprisonment in the fortress of Munkholm, on a rock opposite Drontheim, died at Lausanne in September 1820, in the eighty-third year of his age.

† Life of Caroline Matilda Queen of Denmark, by Sir C. F. Lascelles Wraxall, Bart., vol. iii. pp. 252, 253.

This "conclusive" document—as we are told by the most recent biographer of Queen Caroline Matilda, Sir Lascelles Wraxall—was placed at his disposal by the Duchess of Augustenburg, who was permitted, by the late King of Hanover, to transcribe it from the original document, preserved among the royal archives in that kingdom. Nevertheless, high as this authority appears to be, the document would seem to be of most questionable authority. Having some reason to doubt its verity, the author applied for information on the subject to his Excellency Count Kielmansegge, through whose kindness he has been favoured with the following communication, derived from the most credible official authority in Hanover. "In the royal Hanoverian Archives there is not the letter alluded to of the late Queen Caroline Mathilde of Danemark. Solely, the Royal Museum contains *a printed* copy of a letter, pretending to be written by the said late Queen on her death-bed to her royal brother, King George the Third of Great Britain, and it is presumed that the Duchess of Augustenburg was permitted, by the late King Ernest Augustus' Majesty, to take a copy of this printed copy, now in the Family Museum. Forwarding to you another copy of this printed letter, I feel it my duty to acquaint you further, that the well-informed officers of the Royal Archives are strongly impressed of the opinion, that the said late Queen did never write, nor could write, on her death-bed such a letter, and that the pretended letter of her Majesty is nothing but the work of one of her friends in England, written after her death and then translated. The history of her Majesty's last illness and of her death is here well known, and excludes almost the possibility of her writing and forwarding such a letter to her royal brother." *

* To the Baron Von Malortie, Minister and Chamberlain to H. M. the King of Hanover, the author begs to return his best thanks for his kindness and courtesy in causing him to be supplied with a copy of the disputed letter of the Queen of Den-

The year 1772 was rife with domestic calamities to George the Third. He was still enduring the pain and mortification, occasioned by the misfortunes and tainted reputation of his sister, the Queen of Denmark, when death robbed him of his last surviving parent, the much-abused Princess of Wales. "The news of the death of the Princess of Wales," writes Sir Robert M. Keith, then British Minister at Copenhagen, "affected me sincerely. You all know how much I thought myself honoured by the good opinion of that Princess, who I am firmly persuaded possessed as many intrinsic good qualities, and as much affability of temper, as any lady in Europe. The distresses of our worthy sovereign are indeed manifold; and if ever King deserved the tender affections of his subjects, as well as their obedience, we may safely say without flattery that he is that King." *

The death of the Princess took place at Carlton House on the 8th of February 1772, in the fifty-third year of her age. She had suffered deep distress from the misconduct and foolish marriage of her son, the Duke of Cumberland; and, more recently, the disgrace and deposition of her youngest daughter not only plunged her into still severer affliction, but are said to have hastened her end. Even her arch-maligner, Walpole, admits that her fortitude during her long and agonising illness was "invincible."—"She could swallow," he writes, "but with great difficulty, and not enough to maintain life long. At times, her sufferings, and her struggles to hide them, were so much beyond her strength that she frequently fainted and was thought dead: yet would she not allow she was ill, even to her children; nor would she suffer a single physician or surgeon to inspect

mark, as well as with the information given in the text. Sir Lascelles Wraxall seems not to have been aware that the letter referred to had already appeared in print, in the *Times* newspaper of January 27, 1852, from whence it was transferred to the pages of the *Notes and Queries*, vol. vi. p. 505, first Series.

* Memoirs and Correspondence of Sir Robert M. Keith, K.B., vol. i. p. 258,

her throat, trusting herself solely to a German page who had some medical knowledge; and going out to take the air long after it was expected that she would die in her coach." * Almost up to the hour of her dissolution, not one of her children—not even her eldest daughter, the Duchess of Brunswick, who was constantly with her—could perceive that she entertained any apprehension of her danger. Yet she could scarcely have been in ignorance of her real condition. "She had existed," writes Walpole, "on cordials alone for ten days, from the time she had received the fatal news from Denmark, and died before she could hear again from her daughter." The King appears to have been unremitting in his attentions to his mother during her last illness; attending her every evening with the Queen at eight o'clock; and, on the night before she died, when her end was evidently drawing near, anticipating his visit by an hour, on pretence that he had mistaken the time. Feeble, however, as she was, and excruciating as was her disorder, a cancer in the breast; notwithstanding, moreover, that she had been seized with convulsions in the course of the day, she not only arose and dressed herself to receive the King and Queen, but detained them in conversation with her for four hours. † On parting with them, she even expressed an opinion that she should pass a tranquil night. Before morning, however, it became evident, not only to her attendants but to herself, that her end was rapidly approaching. A short time before she expired, she enquired of her physician how long he considered she might live? Perceiving that he hesitated to answer the question;—"It is no matter," she added, "for I have nothing to say, nothing to do, and nothing to leave." ‡ At six o'clock in the morning she expired without a groan. "The calmness and composure of her death," writes Bishop

* Walpole's Reign of George 3, vol. iv. p. 355.
† Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 374. Ed. 1857.
‡ Mrs. Carter's Letters, vol. iv. p. 51; Annual Register for 1772, p. 72.

Newton, "were further proofs and attestations of the goodness of her life; and she died, as she had lived, beloved and lamented most, by those who knew her best." *

Detested as the Princess was by the English nation, on account of her political conduct, and blamable as were the narrow-minded principles on which she educated her children, there can be little doubt that the praise of Bishop Newton was not undeserved. It was much to her credit that, after the death of her husband, Prince Frederick, the large debts which he left were discharged by her out of her annual income, without any application for aid to Parliament, or even to the King, her son. Still more creditable to her were her munificent acts of private charity. No less a sum than ten thousand a year was expended by her, in pensions to meritorious individuals and in the support of indigent families, few of whom, it is said, were made aware, till after her death, of the name of their benefactress.† It may be mentioned, as a pleasing instance of her kindness of heart, that she rented a house on Kew Green, for the express purpose of sheltering such aged and infirm servants, as had served her long and faithfully. Thus munificently did she expend the liberal income bestowed upon her by the people of England! Thus, too, is explained the expression—which she made use of in her dying moments, that she had "nothing to leave;" a statement which would seem to have been literally true.

On the 1st of July 1774, died at Holland House Kensington, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, Henry Fox Lord Holland. "Lord Holland," writes Walpole to Mann on the 15th of May, "drags on a wretched life, and Lady Holland is dying of a cancer." ‡ Yet, though labouring under many afflictions, his genial humour sparkled to the last. He was

* Bishop Newton's Life of Himself, Works, vol. i. p. 133.
† *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 133.
‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. vi. p. 85. Ed. 1857.

on his death-bed, it is said, when he was told that George Selwyn—"whose passion," to use the words of his friend Walpole, was "to see coffins, and corpses and executions" *—had called to enquire after his health. "The next time," he said, "that Mr. Selwyn calls, show him up: if I am alive, I shall be delighted to see him; if I am dead, he will be glad to see me." † Lady Holland survived her husband only twenty-three days.

* Walpole's Letters, vol. ii. p. 222. Edition, 1857.
† Selwyn Corresp., vol. i. p. 5.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Children of George III.—Domestic life of the Royal Family at Kew—The King's habits of business—Temperance—Personal courage—Moral qualities—Mistakes in political policy—Pleasantry of his manner—Sense of his religious obligations—Respect for Dissenters—The Primate rebuked—Lancaster and Popular Education—The King's protection of agriculture and literature—His intercourse with eminent literary men—Wilkes and Franklin on the character of George III.

In the affections of his Queen, and in the society of his young and rapidly increasing family, the King found no slight compensation for the loss of his remaining parent and the misconduct of his brothers and sister. Before the spring of 1774, Queen Charlotte, though only in her thirtieth year, had given birth to no fewer than ten children; including, in addition to those whose births have already been recorded, Augustus Frederick, afterwards Duke of Sussex, born on the 27th of January 1773, and Adolphus Frederick, afterwards Duke of Cambridge, born on the 24th of February 1774. The children whom, subsequently to that date, she bore her husband were the Princess Mary, afterwards Duchess of Gloucester, born 25th April 1776; the Princess Sophia, born 3rd November 1777; Prince Octavius, born 23rd February 1779; Prince Alfred, born 22nd September 1780; and the Princess Amelia, born 7th August 1783.

From the pen of one who was professedly connected with the Court we have an interesting picture, sketched in the summer of 1775, of the domestic life and habits of George the Third and his Queen, when resident at Kew. "Their majesties rise at six in the morning, and enjoy the two succeeding

hours in a manner which they call their own. At eight, the Prince of Wales, the Bishop of Osnaburg,* the Princess Royal, and the Princes William and Edward, are brought from their respective apartments, to breakfast with their illustrious parents. At nine, the younger children attend, to lisp or smile their good morrows; and whilst the five eldest are closely applying to their tasks, the little ones and their nurses pass the whole morning in Richmond gardens. The King and Queen frequently amuse themselves with sitting in the room while the children dine, and, once a week, attended by the whole offspring in pairs, make the little delightful tour of Richmond gardens. In the afternoon, while the Queen works, the King reads to her. In the evening all the children again pay their duty at Kew House before they retire to bed, and the same order is observed through each returning day. The sovereign is the father of his family. Not a grievance reaches his knowledge that remains unredressed, nor a character of merit or ingenuity disregarded, so that his private conduct must be allowed to be no less exemplary than it is truly amiable. Exercise, air, and light diet, are the grand fundamentals in the King's idea of health. His Majesty feeds chiefly on vegetables, and drinks but little wine. The Queen is what many private gentlewomen would call whimsically abstemious; for, at a table covered with dainties, she prefers the plainest and simplest dish, and seldom eats of more than two things at a meal. Her wardrobe is changed every three months; and while the nobility are eager to supply themselves with foreign trifles, her care is that nothing but what is English shall be provided for her wear." †

* The King's second son, Frederick, had not yet been created Duke of York. He was therefore called after his title of Bishop of Osnaburg, to which See he had been elected on the 27th February 1764, when only six months old.

† "Sketch of their Majesties' domestic life at Kew during the Summer Season." *Annual Register for* 1775, part 2, p. 1.

Among those who, about this period, were afforded favourable opportunities of passing judgment on the character and conduct of the Court, was Dr. Newton, Bishop of Bristol, who, in consequence of almost uninterrupted ill health, had been compelled to take up his residence at Kew, in preference to the unwholesome atmosphere which surrounded his Deanery residence at St. Paul's. "It was an additional pleasure," he writes, "to see and hear so much more of the King and Queen in their privacies; of their conjugal happiness and of their domestic virtues, which, the nearer they are beheld, appear greater and more amiable, and are a shining pattern to the very best of their subjects." Rarely during the winter months was the venerable prelate well enough to risk quitting the house, yet once, he tells us, on "a fine warm day in December, when the wind was south," he availed himself of the opportunity which it gave him of paying his respects to his Sovereign. "Ah!" said the King to him; "a visit from you in December! I did not expect to see you till May." *

The old palace of Kew—with its delightful gardens and its crowd of agreeable local associations—is still an object of interest and curiosity to thousands. It should be borne in mind, however, that the present palace is not the same structure which, in the days of Frederick, Prince of Wales, was known as Kew House, and which, after the death of his widow, when it had become the residence of George the Third, was distinguished as the Queen's Lodge. The "Queen's Lodge," no vestige of which now remains, stood opposite to the present red-brick mansion; the two edifices having in former days been separated by a public carriage-road which ran from Kew Green to Brentford Ferry. Then, and long after the divergence of the ferry-road, the present palace was known indifferently as the Prince's House and

* Bishop Newton's Life of Himself, Works, vol. i. p. 138.

the Royal Nursery; names which it successively derived from the Prince of Wales and other children of George the Third having been reared within its walls. After the demolition of the Queen's Lodge, which commenced in 1802, the present mansion became the occasional residence of George the Third and his consort. *

As we have already observed, the gardens of Kew House are replete with interesting associations. It was in the cool shade of its shrubberies that the frivolous Frederick Prince of Wales listened to the brilliant wit of Chesterfield and Pulteney. Here he might be seen exhibiting his flower-beds to Pope, or listening to the scandal and gossip of Bubb Dodington; and, lastly, it was along these walks that he was induced to hearken to the insidious reasonings of Bolingbroke and Sir William Wyndham, by whom he was only too easily persuaded that Sir Robert Walpole was the wickedest of Ministers and his own father the weakest of Kings. Here, at other times, the Prince might be seen retiring into the more "gloomy alleys" with Lady Middlesex; while, in the more frequented walks, and at a respectful distance from them, strolled side by side his neglected Princess and Lord Bute; the former listening with satisfaction to the pompous compliments paid her by the favourite, and occasionally glancing, with perhaps too much complacency, on the proportions of his exquisitely turned leg. In these walks it was, that Bute first infused

* A view of "Kew House," or rather of the "Queen's Lodge," forms a vignette to the Works and Correspondence of the Rev. James Bradley. The building had been many years in the possession of the Capel family when, about the year 1730, a long lease of it was taken by Frederick, Prince of Wales, the fee of which was afterwards purchased by George the Third of Elizabeth, Countess Dowager of Essex. It was not till the year 1781 that the present palace was bought by the King in trust for Queen Charlotte. *Lysons's Environs of London*, vol. i. pp. 150—2; *The Rev. James Bradley's Works, Memoir prefixed*, p. xv., Oxford 1832, *and MS. information*. The Acts of Parliament 6 George 3, cap. 72, and 25 George 3, cap. 41, contain some curious information relating to the important alterations which have been made in this interesting neighbourhood, consequent on the King carrying out his favourite project of uniting the pleasure grounds of Richmond Lodge with those of Kew.

into the youthful mind of George the Third those Utopian and pernicious doctrines which subsequently proved so detrimental to the well-being of his subjects, as well as to his own. Here, the young Prince was residing when he received the unexpected intelligence of the death of his grandfather. Here, at a later period, his Queen might be seen watering her exotic plants, or feeding her favourite animals in her menagerie. These glades are the same that witnessed the youthful gambols, and resounded to the merry laughter, of that promising and beautiful race of which George the Third was the sire. Within these pleasure-grounds it was that he himself had spent most of the happiest hours of his life; and, lastly, here, on a site now covered with the gayest of flower-beds, he was prostrated by ten of those dreadful weeks of insanity which visited him in the winter of 1788 and 1789.

But, though the palace which witnessed the earlier joys and sorrows of George the Third has passed away for ever, the present palatial residence is not without many interesting associations. When, many years since, the author wandered through the forsaken apartments of the old palace at Kew, he found it apparently in precisely the same condition as when George the Third had made it his summer-residence and when Queen Charlotte had expired within its walls. There were still to be seen, distinguished by their simple furniture and bed-curtains of white dimity, the different sleeping-rooms of the unmarried Princesses, with their several names inscribed over the doors of each. There were still pointed out to him the easy chair in which Queen Charlotte had breathed her last; the old harpsichord which had once belonged to Handel, and on which George the Third occasionally amused himself with playing; his walking-stick; his accustomed chair; the backgammon-board on which he used to play with his equerries, and, lastly, the small apartment in which the pious monarch was accus-

tomed to offer up his prayers and thanksgivings. In that apartment was formerly to be seen a relic of no small interest, the private prayer-book of George the Third. In the prayer which is used during the Session of Parliament, the King with his own hand had obliterated the words "our most religious and gracious King," and had substituted for them "a most miserable sinner."

The sons and daughters of George the Third seem, without an exception, to have taken a lively and lasting interest in the home of their childhood; a circumstance to which it is probably owing that, till the death of King William the Fourth, and the passing away of the generation to which he belonged, the interior of the old palace continued to retain so many of the distinctive features of the past. When, however, some time after the death of that monarch, the author again made a pilgrimage to the spot, the *genius loci* had taken its flight for ever. The apartments had been stripped of their old-fashioned furniture; the walls of their pictures, and the library of its books. With the exception of Handel's harpsichord, the chair in which Queen Charlotte had expired, and some ill-painted portraits, which had been consigned to the garrets, of forgotten equerries and other royal favourites, the old edifice presented as denuded and comfortless an aspect as can well be imagined. The library alone, once a favourite apartment with George the Third, indicated, by its vacant book-shelves, the uses to which it had been formerly put. With this small apartment a trifling, yet not uninteresting story is connected. The King was one day sitting in it alone, when, the fire getting low, he summoned the page in waiting, and desired him to fetch some coals. The attendant, it seems, instead of promptly obeying the King's commands, rang the bell for the footman whose province it was to perform this menial office, and who happened to be a man advanced in years. The King's rebuke to the page was characteristic of the right-minded

monarch. Desiring the attendant to conduct him to the place where the coals were kept, he took up the scuttle, and carrying it himself to the library, threw some of its contents on the fire. Then, handing the coal-scuttle to the attendant, he said—"Never ask an old man to do what you are so much better able to do yourself." *

Not only was George the Third of a naturally vigorous constitution, but the rigorous system of abstinence and bodily exercise, which he had early adopted, seemed to promise him a long life of uninterrupted health. The fact, indeed, is rather a remarkable one, that from the period of his mysterious malady in 1765, till he was temporarily afflicted by insanity in 1788, there was apparently not a single Council, Levee, nor Drawing-room, at which he had been prevented by indisposition from being present. His powers of enduring fatigue were remarkable. For instance, after breakfasting at Windsor, it was a common practice with him to mount his horse, and, however unfavourable might be the state of the weather, to ride the whole way to Buckingham House. From thence he might be seen proceeding in a sedan-chair to St. James's Palace, where he had to undergo the long and tedious ceremony of a levee; his custom being to converse, or, at all events, to exchange words of recognition, with every individual who formed one of the royal circle. After the levee, the King generally attended a meeting of the Privy Council, or gave an audience to his Ministers; his only refreshment during the course of the day being usually a cup of tea and a slice of bread and butter, which his engagements frequently com-

* This, and other traits connected with the domestic life of George III., used to be related by an old female attendant who conducted the occasional visitor over the now forsaken palace of Kew. She had not only been an especial favourite with her royal master and mistress, but, to the last, she used to be honoured with visits, and with kind remembrances in the shape of annual Christmas presents, by their surviving children, most of whom had retained an affectionate feeling for her since their infancy. See "A Day at Kew," in "Gleanings in Natural History," third Series, p. 220, by Edward Jesse.

pelled him to partake of, standing. At five o'clock, or perhaps at a later hour, he entered his coach, and returned to a late meal at Windsor. He was fond of horses; was in the habit of paying an early visit to his stables; was a good rider, and sat a horse admirably. "Do you see my horse?" he once asked of Lord Winchelsea; "I have had him twenty years, and he is good now. Do you know the secret? I'll tell it you. I know his worth, and I treat him accordingly." *

The excellent health which the King long enjoyed, as well as his exemption from the obesity which was constitutional in his family, was once, in the course of a conversation with Lord Mansfield, attributed by him to the following circumstance. He happened, he said, to pay a visit to his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland, not long before the death of that celebrated man, when the conversation turned upon the Duke's increased corpulency. It was a constitutional infirmity, remarked his royal highness, from which his majesty, on reaching middle age, could scarcely expect to be absolved. Temperance and abstinence, he said, were the best remedies, and, if neglected, he added—"Depend upon it, Sir, that nothing can prevent your Majesty growing to my size." Such was the effect produced by these words upon the King's mind, that, as he assured Lord Mansfield, from that moment he formed the resolution of checking his tendency to obesity, by inuring himself to habits of the strictest temperance.† Many years afterwards, in the course of an interesting conversation, at which the authoress of Evelina was present, we find the King congratulating himself on the excellent health which he enjoyed, and attributing it to his rigid adherence to the wholesome rules which he had formerly prescribed for himself. "The fault," he said, "of

* Annual Register for 1820, pp. 707, 708.
† Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. ii. pp. 5—9.

his constitution was a tendency to excessive fat, which, however, he kept in order by the most vigorous exercise, and by the strictest attention to a simple diet." One of the company, Mrs. Delany, commending him for his remarkable forbearance—"No, no;" he said, "it is no virtue; I only prefer eating plain and little, to growing diseased and infirm."* No one could be more simple in his tastes as well as habits; yet, when the time and occasion required it, he ever upheld the kingly dignity with becoming state and magnificence.

The King's personal courage even his bitterest enemies have never called in question. In the hour of peril and of trial it never forsook him. On many memorable occasions—such for instance as when, in 1769, the Duke of Grafton stood by his side in the royal closet at St. James's trembling at the yells and menaces of the mob—such as when, in 1786, the blade of Margaret Nicholson's knife bent upon his breast—and, lastly, when the bullets from Hadfield's pistol whistled over his head at the theatre in 1800—he exhibited a composure, and an apparently utter disregard for danger, which surprised even those who were best acquainted with the constitutional intrepidity of his nature. That, if circumstances had required it, the King would have girded on his sword and fought at the head of his subjects, is a fact sufficiently well established. Both when Great Britain was threatened with invasion by France in 1779, and again, under similar circumstances, at the commencement of the present century, the King had fully made up his mind to take the command of his troops and to encounter the invading army in person. Well might Lord George Germaine write to Sir Henry Clinton on the occasion of the former alarming crisis—"The King's magnanimity is not to be

* Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay, vol. ii. p. 373.

shaken by the nearness of danger." * He was in the habit, at one period of his reign, of receiving numerous anonymous communications, some of them actually threatening his life, and others warning him of the danger of riding out on particular days and on certain roads. Not only, however, did he treat such warnings with contempt, but he even took a pleasure, it is said, in selecting for his day's ride the very road which he had been especially recommended to avoid. "I am aware," he said, "that, considering the little care I take of my person, whoever chooses to sacrifice his own life may deprive me of mine. I only hope, however, that whoever may attempt it, may not do it in a brutal and barbarous manner."

Neither was the moral and political courage of George the Third less conspicuous than his personal fearlessness. His enemies, indeed, have thought proper to denounce his firmness of character as mere obstinacy; nor can it perhaps be denied that he sometimes clung rather too tenaciously to such opinions as he had once deliberately formed. When Nicholls, the author of the "Recollections," once asked Charles Fox whether it was not possible to conciliate his Sovereign—"No," was Fox's reply, "it is impossible; no man can gain the King." † Nevertheless, his firmness often shone forth to advantage, both to himself and to his subjects. "George the Third," said Lord Eldon, "was a man of firm mind, with whom one had pleasure in acting. He was very slow in forming his opinion; very diligent in procuring every information on the subject; but, once convinced, he would act with the most unflinching firmness." In awarding this peculiar praise to his royal master, Lord Eldon quoted, in illustration of his remarks, the King's beau-

* Earl Stanhope's History of England, vol. vi. p. 407.

† Nicholls' Recollections of the Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 390, 2nd Edition.

tiful saying, when pressed to give his consent to Roman Catholic Emancipation. "I can give up my crown, and retire from power. I can quit my palace and live in a cottage. I can lay my head on a block and lose my life; but I can *not* break my Coronation Oath." * A fear of incurring responsibility, too often a weakness even in the characters of the bravest and the best, was unquestionably not one of the short-comings of George the Third. The more tempestuous the political horizon, the firmer the high-spirited monarch stood at his post, and the less inclination he showed to shift either danger or odium from his own shoulders to those of others. The steady support which he extended to Lord Bute, when that nobleman was in the height of his unpopularity; his unflinching protection of the Duke of Grafton during the formidable tumults in 1769; and, lastly, the great responsibility which he took upon himself when, during the disgraceful "Protestant riots" in 1780, he opposed the military to the mob, afford sufficient evidence of his high moral as well as personal courage. Had he been Charles the First, instead of George the Third, he would never have abandoned the Earl of Strafford to his fate; nor, had he been in the situation of George the Second, would he ever have forsaken Sir Robert Walpole. To use his own remarkable words written to Lord North on the 19th of May 1778—"He [Sir Robert] had firmly for twenty years withstood a strong Opposition. *The Crown deserted him* and his enemies came into office." †

Indeed, a more high-spirited man, as well as a more thorough Englishman at heart, than George the Third, existed not throughout his dominions. A speech which he made to Mr. Jackson, when employed as British Envoy at Copenhagen in 1807, used to be related by the late Lord Eldon as a pleasing instance of the King's high spirit. Previously

* Twiss's Life of Lord Eldon, vol. ii. p. 358.

† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 118.

to the celebrated bombardment of that city by Admiral Lord Gambier, Jackson had been sent to wait upon the Prince Regent of Denmark, with a proposition that the Danish fleet should be surrendered up for a season to the British Admiral, in order to prevent its falling into the hands of the French. Jackson having, on his return to England, been presented to George the Third, and having related to him the result of his mission, the King abruptly inquired of him whether the Danish Prince had granted him the audience, upstairs or down? Jackson replying that it was in an apartment on the ground floor—"I am glad of it;" said his Majesty; "I am glad of it for your own sake; for if the Prince had had half the spirit of George the Third, he would have infallibly kicked you down stairs." This anecdote was related to Lord Eldon by the King himself.*

The political errors of George the Third may have been many; his prejudices may occasionally have been deep-rooted, and the public measures which he approved may at times have been opposed to the interests of his people. These, however, were the faults, not of a corrupt heart, but of a warped judgment and a defective education, and are therefore not incompatible with that inflexible uprightness of character, which distinguished him in every relation of public, as well as private life. The great object of his existence was to do what was right. He was in the noblest sense of the word an honest man. His love of his country was equalled only by his firmness and his love of truth. To Lord Chatham we find him writing in May 1767—"My spirits, I thank Heaven, want no rousing. My love to my country, as well as what I owe to my own character and to my family, prompt me not to yield to faction. Though none of my Ministers stand by

* Twiss's Life of Eldon, vol. ii. p. 60.

me, I cannot truckle." * In his strong sense of justice; in the sedulous pains which he took to acquaint himself with the wants and interests of his people, and in the anxiety which he showed to alleviate the one and to advance the other, he certainly exhibited kingly virtues of no mean order. "I can scarcely conceive," writes the Republican Franklin, "a King of better dispositions, of more exemplary virtues, or more truly desirous of promoting the welfare of his subjects." †

The King's good faith, his high sense of honour, and his solemn regard for truth, have seldom been called in question. For instance, after his several recoveries from those dreadful aberrations of intellect with which it was the will of the Almighty to afflict him, he ever sedulously endeavoured to recollect any promises he might have made previously to the derangement of his mental faculties, and was always no less punctiliously exact in performing them. He may have conceived too lofty a notion of the royal prerogative; he may have been too eager and zealous in defending what he regarded as his legitimate rights; but, on the other hand, the solemn importance which he attached to his coronation oath would at all times have prevented his making any deliberate encroachments on the rights and liberties of his people. "The King," said Lord North, "would live on bread and water to preserve the Constitution of this country. He would sacrifice his life to maintain it inviolate."

Of the higher branches of political economy, of the statistics of law and commerce, and of the grand principles of Colonial and Foreign policy, the King appears to have acquired neither a deep knowledge nor very enlightened views. But, on the other hand, by a constant and unwearied attention to public affairs, he had made himself thoroughly

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iii. p. 261.

† Franklin's Corresp., vol. vii. p. 440. Ed. 1840.

conversant with the working of domestic politics, with the characters and capacity of public men, and with the mode of transacting business in the various offices of the State. "Being far from deficient," writes Lord Brougham, "in natural quickness, and the more regularly industrious because of his habitually temperate life, he made himself thoroughly master of all the ordinary details of business; insomuch, that a high authority * has ascribed to him a more thorough knowledge of the duties of each several department of the State than any other man ever possessed." Again Lord Brougham observes—"The correspondence which he carried on with his confidential servants during the ten most critical years of his life † lies before us, and it proves that his attention was ever awake to all the occurrences of the government. Not a step was taken in foreign, colonial, or domestic affairs, that he did not form his opinion upon it, and exercise his influence over it. The instructions to ambassadors, the orders to governors, the movements of forces, down to the marching of a single battalion, in the districts of this country, the appointments to all offices in Church and State; not only the giving away of judgeships, bishoprics, regiments, but the subordinate promotions, lay and clerical; all these form the topics of his letters; on all, his opinion is pronounced decisively; on all his will is declared peremptorily. In one letter he decides the appointment of a Scotch puisne judge; in another the march of a troop from Buckinghamshire into Yorkshire; in a third the nomination to the Deanery of Worcester; in a fourth he says that if Adam, the architect, succeeds Worsley at the Board of Works, he shall think Chambers ill-used." ‡ Yet, notwithstanding the large amount of official business and correspondence which the King thus entailed upon him-

* The late Sir Herbert Taylor.

† Viz., during the Administration of Lord North.

‡ Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. pp. 11—14. Edition 1858.

self, it was transacted by him without any clerical assistance. "It may be remarked," writes Sir Herbert Taylor, "that during many years his Majesty had not any one to assist him in his epistolary communications; nay, not even in what may be called the mechanical parts of it; that in fact he had not recourse to the aid of a private Secretary until blindness rendered it indispensable." * Yet, not only was the King in the habit of taking copies of his own letters whenever they appeared to him to be of importance; † but when, during his insanity in 1788-9, the Prince of Wales took upon himself to open his father's cabinet, his papers, to use the Prince's own words, "appeared to be arranged with great regularity and method." ‡

Such of the King's letters as have as yet seen the light, though occasionally wanting in elegance, and sometimes even ungrammatical, are nevertheless written in clear and energetic language, and are always to the point. He wrote and composed with great facility, which may have been in part the cause of the defects to which we have alluded. "No man," according to his son, the late King of Hanover, "wrote better, or knew how to express his opinions in a conciser way, than George the Third."§ The King's conversation, like his correspondence, was distinguished by good sense, and except when he was nervously embarrassed, by singular clearness of expression.

A leading feature in the character of George the Third was the punctuality which he ever practised himself, and

* Remarks on an article in the Edinburgh Review, by Lieutenant-General Sir Herbert Taylor, p. 9.

† Rose's Diaries and Corresp., vol. ii. p. 163.

‡ Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 312.

§ MS. letter to the late Mr. Croker. It appears by a letter from Charles James Fox to Mr. Thomas Grenville, dated May 21, 1782, that the King fully appreciated a good epistolary style in other persons. *Court and Cabinets of George 3, by the Duke of Buckingham*, vol. i. p. 29. See also *Memoirs and Correspondence of Sir Robert M. Keith*, vol. i. p. 373, *note*, in which the King will be found speaking of Sir Robert's private letters from Copenhagen, which he had evidently desired to peruse, as "*delightful letters.*"

which he no less scrupulously exacted from others. A well-known rebuke of Louis the Fourteenth to a dilatory attendant—"Sir, you almost made me wait"—was probably on more than one occasion on the lips of the English monarch. With reference to his habitual punctuality, the following anecdote has been related. The King had ordered a certain scientific instrument of the celebrated mechanist and optician, Jesse Ramsden, whose talents he fully appreciated, and whom he was willing to oblige. Aware that punctuality was not among the virtues of the eccentric genius, the King purposely named a distant day, on which he stipulated that it should be personally delivered to him at Kew. When the appointed day, however, arrived, not only was the instrument still unfinished, but it was not till the same day twelve months that the philosopher proceeded with it to Kew, where, to his surprise and disappointment, he was informed that his admission to the royal presence was impossible. "Only tell his Majesty," he said to the servants, "that it is Ramsden, and I am sure that he will admit me." At length the page-in-waiting, overpowered by his importunities, was induced to announce his arrival to the King, who good-naturedly ordered him to be ushered into his closet. Having, in the first instance, carefully examined the instrument, the King addressed himself to the mechanist. "I am told, Mr. Ramsden," he said, "that you are the least punctual of any man in England, and yet I find that you have kept your appointment to the very day. The only difference is that you have mistaken the year." *

When surrounded by his children, or when in the society of persons whom he loved, the manners and conversation of George the Third were distinguished by the greatest simplicity and good-humour. "In his intercourse with his daughters," writes Sir Herbert Taylor, " and with the Dukes of York

* Memoirs of R. Lovell Edgeworth, vol. i. p. 186; Sir Walter Scott's Misc. Prose Works, vol. ii. pp. 324—6.

and Cambridge, his two favourite sons, he was most kind and affectionate, and he entered with seeming interest into the subjects and pursuits which engaged their attention. It may indeed be said, that there was in his Majesty's manner and deportment, when in the circle of his family, and in the manifestation of his affection, a character of simplicity which would seem to belong to the endearing ways of a child rather than to a man advanced in years, and often oppressed by the weight and anxiety of business. Towards his attendants and servants, his Majesty was indulgent and considerate, and he missed no opportunity of giving credit, where due, for faithful and zealous service. It is almost needless to add, that they were warmly attached and devoted to him."*

The statesman whom, next to Lord North, the King personally loved the most, and to whom his manner was ever most affectionate, appears to have been Lord Eldon. "I do not know," said the Chancellor, "what made George the Third so fond of me, but he *was* fond of me. Did I ever tell you the manner in which he gave me the Seals? When I went to him, he had his coat buttoned thus, (one or two buttons fastened at the lower part,) and putting his right hand within, he drew the Seals out from the left side, saying—'I give them to you *from my heart.*'" †

The King's birthday, the fourth of June, happened to be the same as that of Lord Eldon. On one of the anniversaries of the day, the latter had occasion to appear before the King in his full robes as Lord Chancellor, and was commencing a speech with the usual formality—"Please your Majesty," &c.—when the King suddenly interrupted him. "Stop, stop!" he said, "I wish you many happy returns of the day. Now you may go on, but remember I spoke first." ‡

* Remarks on an Article in the Edinburgh Review, p. 19.
† Twiss's Life of Lord Eldon, vol. i. p. 368. ‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 358.

Lord Eldon was on another occasion in the presence of George the Third, when the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other persons of high rank, formed the circle around the Sovereign. "I believe," remarked the King, "that I am the first King whose Archbishop of Canterbury and whose Chancellor both ran away with their wives. Was it not so, Chancellor?" Lord Eldon was sly enough to turn the laugh from himself to the Archbishop. "May it please your Majesty," he said, "to ask the Archbishop that question first."—"It turned the laugh," said Lord Eldon, "to my side, for the Lords were beginning to titter." The King on another occasion observed to Archbishop Sutton—"I believe your grace has a large family—better than a dozen." "No, Sir," replied the Archbishop, "only eleven."—"Well," retorted the King, "is not that better than a dozen?" *

Nothing the King liked better than to fling a good-humoured jest at the lawyers. For instance, at the time when Lord Chief Baron Macdonald and Mr. Baron Graham were severally sitting in the Courts of Westminster, it was remarked that the only fault of the one lay in his fingers, which were never out of his snuff-box, and that of the other, that his tongue was seldom silent. "True!" remarked the King—"the Court of Exchequer has a snuff-box at one end, and a chatter-box at the other." †

Lord Eldon himself, as we have seen, was not exempt from the harmless raillery of his Sovereign. At the time when the punishment of death was much more common than at the present day, it happened that a foot-pad had been condemned to death on account of a street robbery which he had committed close to Lord Eldon's residence in Bedford Square. When the Recorder presented his Report to the King, all the Ministers, with the exception of one,

* Twiss's Life of Lord Eldon, vol. ii. pp. 358, 359.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 327.

gave it as their opinion that the man should be left for execution. Observing, however, that Lord Eldon had not spoken, the King called upon him for his opinion, which the Chancellor gave in favour of mercy. It had been the custom, said his lordship, to hang for street robberies, and no doubt the offence was a very grave one. He considered, however, that a distinction ought to be made between cases in which personal violence had been resorted to, and cases in which there had been none. In the present instance, he added, there had been no violence, and he therefore thought it a case in which his Majesty might fairly exercise his royal clemency. "Very well," said the King, "since his lordship, who lives in Bedford Square, thinks there is no great harm in committing robberies there, the poor fellow shall *not* be hanged." *

One more anecdote may be related, having reference to another eminent Judge, Lord Kenyon. Though in other respects a very worthy man, Lord Kenyon was frequently betrayed into ebullitions of temper, which, in his cooler moments, no one could more deeply regret than himself, and which, in fact, on his becoming Chief Justice of the King's Bench, he had strength of mind enough to lay under a wholesome control. The King, who had a great personal regard for Lord Kenyon, was very well pleased with his reformation. "My Lord," he said to him with a pleasant play upon the words—"I hear that since you have been in the King's Bench, you have *lost your temper*. You know my great regard for you, and I may therefore venture to tell you that I was glad to hear it." †

With the wit and eccentricities of George Selwyn, not omitting the morbid pleasure he took in witnessing appalling scenes, the King seems to have been perfectly familiar. The following extract of a letter from Storer to Lord Auckland not only exhibits a pleasing instance of the King's humour,

* Twiss's Life of Lord Eldon, vol. i. p. 399.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 355.

From the pen of an eye-witness, we have a very interesting account of the King's demeanour at one of these imposing ceremonies—the Installation of the Knights of the Garter which took place at Windsor in 1787. "The King," writes Madame D'Arblay, "was to make an offering as Sovereign of the Garter. He was seated in the Dean of Windsor's stall, and the Queen sat by his side. The Princesses were in the opposite seats, and all of them at the end of the church. When the service was over the offering ceremony began. The Dean and the senior Canon went first to the Communion Table. The Dean then read aloud—'Let your light so shine before men,' &c. The organ began a slow and solemn movement, and the King came down from his stall, and proceeded, with a grave and majestic walk, towards the Communion Table. When he had proceeded about a third of the way, he stopped and bowed to the altar. Then he again moved on, and, at an equal distance, stopped for the same formality, which was a third, and last time, repeated as he reached the steps of the altar. Then he made his offering, which, according to the order of the original institution, was ten pounds in gold and silver, and delivered it in a purse. He then knelt down, and made a silent prayer, after which, in the same measured steps, he returned to his stall, when the whole ceremony concluded by another slow movement on the organ. The air of piety, and the unaffected grace and dignity with which the King performed this rite, surprised and moved me. Mr. Smelt, the most affectionate of his many loyal subjects, even shed tears from emotion, in looking at him in this serious office. The King, I am told, always acquits himself with true majesty, where he is necessarily to appear in state as a monarch." *

Though strongly opposed to Catholic Emancipation, the

* Madame D'Arblay's Diary and Letters, vol. iii. pp. 269—70.

King, as we shall presently have to demonstrate, was, in all other respects, friendly to religious toleration. Many of his servants were Dissenters, and of the Methodists he spoke with kindness. Neither was he bigotedly opposed to reforms in the Church of England. When, in 1790, Dr. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, proposed to the Duke of Grafton to introduce a Bill into the House of Lords for expunging the Athanasian Creed from the Litany, the Bishop appears to have founded his hopes of success on the strong presumption that the innovation would not be displeasing to the King. A curious anecdote on this subject was related to the Bishop by Dr. Heberden. On some occasion at Windsor, when the Creed of St. Athanasius formed part of the appointed service of the day, the officiating clergyman no sooner commenced reading the words—"*Whosoever will be saved*," &c., than the King, whose practice it was to pronounce every response in a clear and audible voice, suddenly became silent. Surprised at the circumstance, the clergyman recommenced, in a marked and louder tone—"*Whosoever will be saved*," &c. It was, however, to no purpose. The King maintained an imperturbable silence till the Minister commenced the Apostles' Creed, when his Majesty delivered the responses with his usual distinct and audible intonation.*

Another characteristic anecdote has been related of George the Third, which, if it had been told of any other monarch less eminently pious, might fairly have exposed him to the charge of irreverence. Towards the latter part of his reign, being in attendance at Divine Service at a time when his mind was much distracted by political events, he continued to repeat the responses with his usual calmness till the congregation came to the tenth verse of the *Venite, exultemus Domino*. Regarding the words as singularly applicable to

* Bishop Watson's Anecdotes of his Own Life, vol. i. pp. 392, 395.

his own circumstances, he is said to have thrust forward his person from the royal closet, and to have repeated with an unmistakable emphasis;—"Forty years long was *I* grieved with this generation, and said: it is a people that do err in their hearts, for they have not known *my* ways."

As the friend and advocate of religious toleration, whenever he considered it to be consistent with his Coronation oath, too much praise cannot be awarded to George the Third. He was on one occasion passing by a place of worship in the neighbourhood of one of his palaces, when, perceiving it to be surrounded by a disorderly crowd of persons, he stopped his carriage and enquired the cause of the disturbance. Having been told that it was only "some affair" between the Methodists and their neighbours, he made no secret of his displeasure. "The Methodists," he said—loud enough to be heard by many of the bystanders—"are a quiet, good kind of people, and will disturb nobody. If I can learn that any persons in my employment disturb them, they shall be instantly dismissed." In the month of November 1770 we find him giving one thousand pounds for the benefit of the Dissenting Ministers residing in Nova Scotia, and at the same time subscribing five hundred pounds towards building a church in the Savoy, for the use of the German Protestants in London.* On another occasion, when a right reverend prelate complained to him of the Dissenters, and of the "great disturbance" which they made in his Diocese, the King at once silenced his murmurs. "Make Bishops of them, my Lord," he said; "make Bishops of them."—"But, Sir," was the reply, "we cannot make a Bishop of Lady Huntingdon."—"No," said the King, "but see if you cannot imitate the zeal of these people."—"I wish," he added, "there was a Lady Huntingdon in every diocese in my kingdom." †

* Annual Register for 1770, p. 164.

† Life and Times of Selina Countess of Huntingdon, vol. ii. p. 282. Lady Selina

With Lady Huntingdon herself, when that pious and excellent woman came to be personally known to him, the King seems to have been exceedingly pleased. She appeared, he told Lord Dartmouth, to combine, with the ease and politeness of a woman of rank, talents of a very superior order, and an enthusiasm in the cause of religion which rendered her an honour to her sex. To Lady Huntingdon herself he observed—"I have been told so many odd things of your ladyship, that I am free to confess I felt a great degree of curiosity to see if you were at all like other women." He added, however—"I am happy in having an opportunity of assuring your ladyship how very highly I estimate your character, your zeal, and abilities, which cannot be consecrated to a more noble purpose." If the King was pleased with Lady Huntingdon, she seems to have been no less satisfied with her reception by the Head of the Church. "We discussed," she writes, "a great many topics, for the conversation lasted upwards of an hour without intermission. The Queen spoke a good deal; asked many questions, and before I retired insisted on my taking some refreshment. On parting I was permitted to kiss their Majesties' hands, and when I returned my humble and most grateful acknowledgments for their very great condescension, their Majesties immediately assured me they felt both gratified and pleased with the interview, which they were so obliging as to wish might be renewed." Some time afterwards, when a lady of high rank, adopting the fashionable jargon of the day, sneered at this admirable woman as a mere wild enthusiast, the King at once undertook her defence. "Are you acquainted with Lady Huntingdon?" he good-humouredly asked. "No," was the reply. "Have you ever been in her society?"—"Never."—"Then," said the King, "never form your opinion of any one from the

Shirley, daughter of Washington, second Earl Ferrars, married, June 3rd, 1728, Theophilus, Earl of Huntingdon. She died, at an advanced age, in 1791.

ill-natured remarks and censures of others. Judge for yourself; and you have my leave to tell any body how highly I think of Lady Huntingdon." *

Lady Huntingdon's object in seeking an interview with the King, will be best explained by the following remarkable letter addressed by the King to the Primate, Dr. Cornwallis:—

The King to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

"My good Lord Prelate,

"I could not delay giving you the notification of the grief and concern with which my breast was affected at receiving authentic information that *routs* have made their way into your Palace. At the same time, I must signify to you my sentiments on this subject, which hold those levities and vain dissipations as utterly inexpedient, if not unlawful, to pass in a residence for many centuries devoted to divine studies, religious retirement, and the extensive exercise of charity and benevolence. I add, in a place where so many of your predecessors have led their lives in such sanctity as has thrown lustre on the pure religion they professed and adorned.

"From the dissatisfaction with which you must perceive I behold these improprieties—not to speak in harsher terms—and on still more pious principles, I trust you will suppress them immediately, so that I may not have occasion to show any further marks of my displeasure, or to interpose in a different manner.

"May God take your Grace into his Almighty protection.

"I remain, my Lord Primate,

"Your gracious friend,

"G. R." †

We have yet to record some further pleasing evidence of the enlightened liberality of a monarch who has been too often denounced as the dullest of the dull and the most bigoted of bigots. At a time when the education of the poorer classes of society was denounced by prelates and

* Life and Times of Selina Countess of Huntingdon, vol. ii. pp. 282, 283, 285.
† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 283.

statesmen as a dangerous and levelling innovation, George the Third not only announced his approval of the new system of instruction introduced by Joseph Lancaster, but extended to him his patronage, and subscribed to his schools. "He hoped," was his exalted expression, "to see the day when every poor child in his dominions should be able to read his Bible."—"Thousands of ragged children," writes the Edinburgh Reviewer, in 1807, "will pray for him, and remember him, long after his Majesty is forgotten by every Lord of the Chamber and by every Clerk of the Closet." * Happily, the powerful and narrow-minded prejudice which would willingly have stifled the efforts of the illustrious teacher, and deprived the poor of the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of rational religion, proved of no avail. "This phenomenon," proceeds the Edinburgh Reviewer, "we owe to the honest and intrepid support which the monarch, the Head of the Church, gave to the oppressed Sectary; and we really in our conscience think it the brightest passage in the history of his long and eventful reign." † So delighted was the King with an article in the Edinburgh Review, written by the late Reverend Sydney Smith, defending Joseph Lancaster against the hostility of the Church, that he made Sir Herbert Taylor read it to him a second time.‡

The pursuits and amusements, with which George the Third occupied his leisure hours, were such as evinced an intelligent, an accomplished, and an amiable mind. He took a pleasure in painting, architecture, and botany. It was under his patronage that the eminent American botanist, John Bartram—"the greatest natural botanist in the world," as Linnæus styled him—prosecuted his studies and researches from the shore of Lake Ontario to the source of the river St. Juan, thus supplying the gardens and pleasure-grounds

* Edinburgh Review, vol. xi. p. 71.

† Edinburgh Review, vol. xvii. pp. 68, 69, 85.

‡ Selections from the Writings of the Rev. Sydney Smith, p. 3. See the Edinburgh Review, vol. ix. p. 177.

of the New World with the trees, the shrubs and flowers of the Old.* But the science in which the King especially delighted was music. To George Selwyn, Lord March writes on the 3rd of December 1776—"The King was at the Opera, which he scarce ever misses." He had not only a true ear for music, but also possessed a taste, which enabled him to appreciate and to enjoy compositions of the highest sublimity. "His Majesty's partiality for Handel's music," writes no mean judge of that art, Michael Kelly, "was generally spoken of; but I believe it was not universally known what an excellent and accurate judge he was of its merits." † The King's taste for the Drama kept pace with his love for music. So frequent were his visits to the theatre, that the people of London are said to have been as well acquainted with his features as with those of their next-door neighbour. His glee during the performance of a broad farce, or at a droll hit in a pantomime, may at times have been somewhat too exuberantly manifested, but his subjects did not love him the less that he showed himself completely at home in the midst of them. Neither did his sense of the ridiculous prevent his enjoying the higher beauties of the drama. Frequently Mrs. Siddons, and sometimes Garrick, were sent for to read plays or poetry in the royal circle, either at Buckingham House or Windsor. Garrick told Cradock, the autobiographer, that he had read portions of the "Clandestine Marriage" in a crude state "to the King and Queen," and described them as having been "greatly amused." ‡

* Allen's American Biog. Dict., Art. Bartram. During the reigns of George I. and George II. the number of exotics, hardy as well as tender, imported into England, had been only 1952; whereas, under the fostering auspices of George III., the number imported during his reign amounted to as many as 6756; being more than half the whole number of exotics now flourishing in the gardens and parks of the United Kingdom. *Quarterly Review*, vol. xxiv. p. 415.

† Reminiscences of Michael Kelly, vol. i. p. 300. 2nd Edition. See also Memoirs of Dr. Burney, vol. ii. pp. 385—7, and vol. iii. p. 18; Madame D'Arblay's Memoirs, vol. vi. p. 222; and the Annual Register for 1820, p. 701.

‡ Cradock's Memoirs, vol. i., p. 201; Kelly's Reminiscences, vol. ii. p. 226. 2nd

Another pursuit, in which George the Third took a steadfast interest, was agriculture. To the zealous example, indeed, which he set his subjects may be traced the organization of the present Agricultural Societies, and the great benefit which they have conferred upon the country. Another favourite pursuit of the King was the study of mechanics. In the construction of optical and other philosophical instruments he took an especial pleasure. The arts and sciences, indeed, lay under a great obligation to him. Before he had completed his thirty-first year, a noble Observatory, completely fitted with every apparatus required for philosophical purposes, had been erected by Sir William Chambers at the King's expense in the "Old Park" at Richmond. He had raised the art of painting from its long neglected and degraded state by founding the Royal Academy, of which Sir Joshua Reynolds was appointed the first President. He was also honoured with knighthood on the occasion. Lastly, under the King's immediate auspices Captain Cook, in company with the learned naturalist Dr. Solander, Mr. Green, Assistant Astronomer Royal, and Sir Joseph Banks, sailed for New Zealand with the double and admirable object of extending maritime discovery, and advancing the interests of astronomy and of other branches of science. During the reign, indeed, of no British monarch, since the days of the enlightened and accomplished Tudors, had the spirit of naval enterprise and distant discovery received a more encouraging impulse than under the long and fostering protection of the most unjustly maligned of the Princes of the House of Brunswick. "The reign of George the Third," writes the Quarterly Reviewer in 1817, "will stand conspicuous and proudly pre-eminent in future history for the spirit with which discoveries were prosecuted, and the

Edition; Life of Hannah More, vol. i. p. 91; Campbell's Life of Mrs. Siddons, vol. ii. p. 129; Biographia Dramatica, article "Lethe"; Annual Register for 1820, pp. 701, 702.

objects of science promoted."* Early in his reign, the famous voyages of Byron and Cook enjoyed his immediate encouragement. He not only entertained a deeply patriotic feeling for the Navy, but had acquired a partial knowledge of Naval Architecture, which he preserved by retaining at Buckingham House models of the Royal Dockyards and ships, which he took a pleasure in consulting. "These modes of exerting a superintendence over the Navy," writes the American Minister, Rush, "seem better in themselves, and, it must be owned, more befitted a sovereign, than if he had turned ship-carpenter like Peter of Russia." †

"The late King," in the words of the Quarterly Reviewer, "appreciated painting and music with a real feeling of what was excellent in both. Handel was his favourite musician, and it will be remembered to his honour that, for thirty years, he employed Mr. West when that admirable artist had no commission from any other person." ‡ Sir Joshua Reynolds was personally a favourite with him; for the genius of Barry he entertained a high admiration; under his patronage Jervis made his happy improvements in the beautiful art of staining and colouring glass. Between the years 1780 and 1801 the King paid to West for pictures and designs no less a sum than £34,187; § and for the sum of £20,000 purchased the fine collection of paintings and gems made by Joseph Smith, Esq., Consul at Venice.‖ He not only instituted the Royal Academy, but took a constant interest in its well-being, and was proud of being its founder. He deprecated anything like dissension among the Academicians; took a pleasure in seeing them established in their new and handsome apartments at Somerset House;

* Quarterly Review, vol. xvi. p. 154, *note*; vol. xviii. p. 213.

† Rush's Residence at the Court of England, p. 139, first series.

‡ Quarterly Review, vol. xxiii. p. 591.

§ Smith's Life of Nollekens, vol. ii. p. 395, 2nd Edition.

‖ Lady Mary W. Montagu's Works, edited by Lord Wharncliffe, vol. iii. p. 89. See also the Dactyliotheca Smithiana, quarto; Venice 1767.

and, lastly, he devoted many hours in attending their annual exhibitions, on which occasions, by his audible encomiums on individual merit, he still further encouraged rising native genius.* Assuredly then, when Gough—in dedicating to George the Third his laborious and noble edition of CAMDEN'S BRITANNIA—invoked him as the "patron of every useful and pleasing art and science;" the praise was not undeservedly bestowed.†

Although George the Third was not a profound, nor, properly speaking, an accomplished scholar, he had nevertheless stored up in his mind a large amount of miscellaneous knowledge which enabled him to converse with freedom, and even distinction, not only with the learned and the scientific, but with persons of every class of his subjects, whatever might be their professions or pursuits. "The King," writes Sir Herbert Taylor, "had not enjoyed the advantage of a good education. He himself admitted that it had been much neglected; and he regretted it especially, as his early accession to the throne had rendered very difficult the recovery of the time lost or misapplied in the preceding years. But he did attempt it." Neither, as we have seen, was the attempt a fruitless one. Sir Herbert Taylor informs us that the King had read "much that was

* Annual Register for 1820, p. 700.

† Nichols's Literary Anecdotes, vol. vi. p. 278. The dedication, in which the words in the text occurred, was withdrawn by Gough previously to publication (*Ibid.* p. 276), and the following dedication substituted—

To The
Patron of Arts and Sciences,
The Father of his People,
GEORGE 3,
Who has condescended to encourage
Researches into Antiquity,
This Work, the earliest General Account
of his Kingdoms, is humbly dedicated
by his most dutiful Subject,
RICHARD GOUGH.

Second edition, folio, 1806. The work is said to have occupied seven years in translating, and nine in printing. *Nichols, ut supra*, p. 273.

useful," and that he had especially devoted himself to studying the laws and constitution of the great country which he had been appointed to govern.* From other sources we learn that he was master of the Latin and Italian languages, and that he conversed fluently in French and German. His education, it is true, had been neglected, but study, assisted by a memory of remarkable retentiveness, had more than repaired the deficiencies of the past.

"George the Third," writes Sir Walter Scott, "might be termed a bibliographer rather than a student; yet he read a good deal also, and rather for improvement than amusement." From the great novelist we learn that the King was a competitor with his early friend, the Duke of Roxburgh, for the purchase of choice books.† Interested, however as he was in the acquisition of literary rarities, no collector could possibly be more fair or more liberal in his dealings. It was a part of his instructions to his librarian never to bid against a scholar, a professor, or a collector of moderate fortune. The magnificent library which he formed at Buckingham House contained sixty-three thousand volumes, and cost, it is said, not less than £130,000. It was "more numerous and curious," said Dr. Johnson, "than he should have supposed any person could have formed in the time employed by the King."‡ It is now the property of the nation; forming what is called the King's Collection, in the British Museum.§

* Remarks on an Article in the Edinburgh Review, p. 9.

† Misc. Prose Works, vol. iv. p. 325. "Each," writes Sir Walter, "was the happy possessor of a copy of Caxton's Book of Troye; but the King examined his own with such accuracy as enabled him to prove to demonstration that, though both copies were of the same edition, that in the Royal Library must have been more early thrown off than the Duke's, because a leaf in the former was what is technically called locked, an error which had been discerned and corrected in the Duke's copy; so that his Majesty triumphed that his own copy, of the first book (we believe) of the English press, was also the earliest printed." *Ibid.*

‡ Boswell's Life of Johnson, p. 184. Edition 1848, by Croker.

§ Cunningham's Hand-Book of London, Art. British Museum. "King George III. began to collect a library in the year 1765. He laid the foundation of it by the purchase of a library of a very eminent character at Venice, belonging to Consul

Lord Chancellor Eldon, when speaking of the literary attainments of George the Third, used to relate the following anecdote. Lord Chief Justice Kenyon, he said, though a great lawyer, was but an indifferent scholar, and consequently his Latin quotations were not unfrequently the jest of the Bar. "When I was made Chief Justice of the Common Pleas," continued Lord Eldon, "George the Third, on my kissing hands, said to me—'If you talk Latin, when on the Bench, let it be more classical than Kenyon's. You had better speak English only, than Kenyon's Latin.' Upon my carrying to his Majesty, upon some Judge's appointment, the ring, which, previous to his appointment as a Judge, upon being made Serjeant, he gives the Chancellor to be tendered to his Majesty, the King, upon reading the inscription upon the ring—said, '*This* Judge *may* talk Latin. I see he reads Horace.'" *

For the English Universities, and indeed for all the learned orthodox collegiate societies, the King ever entertained the highest reverence. It was therefore with a natural dissatisfaction that he learned the intention of the first Lord Melville, then Henry Dundas, to apply to him to confer upon a Scottish medical practitioner, of whom the King knew little or nothing, the honour of a baronetcy. No

Smith. About the year 1767, two years after, the suppression of the Jesuits' houses began. Their libraries were turned out upon the world, and the King bought some of the greatest rarities in literature at the smallest price a collector could expect." *Evidence of Sir Henry Ellis before the House of Commons in* 1836. "The King," writes the Rev. Charles Godwyn to a friend, Sept. 22, 1762, "has just purchased a library which contains the most valuable private collection of books to be found in Italy. They belonged to Consul Smith who resided at Venice. Their value consists chiefly in this, that there is among them a great number of the scarce, first-printed, editions of the Classics. I have seen a catalogue of them which makes a volume in 4to." *Nichols's Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. viii. p. 230. The King, on another occasion, is mentioned as having offered 5000*l.* for Askew's small but rare collection of books. *Ibid.* vol. iv. p. 513, *note.* It is needless perhaps to mention, that George the Third's library was presented by his son, George the Fourth, to the nation. His Majesty's letter to the Prime Minister, the Earl of Liverpool, communicating his princely intentions, will be found in the *Notes and Queries*, vol. iv. p. 446, *First Series.*

* Twiss's Life of Lord Chancellor Eldon, vol. i. p. 402-3.

one was better aware of the King's prejudices on the subject than Lord Melville himself, and accordingly, when the time came for him to prefer his application formally to the King in his closet, it was not without some difficulty that he could induce himself to stammer out his request. "What!" said the good-humoured monarch, who was aware of the cause of, and enjoyed, his embarrassment, "is that all? I have no objection to make your friend a Baronet. What I was afraid of was that you came to ask me to make a Scotch apothecary a physician. *That*, you know, is more difficult." * After the interview, as the King passed from his closet to the levee-chamber, he happened to encounter Lord Eldon and one of the royal physicians, to whom he triumphantly related what had taken place between Lord Melville and himself. "You are both of you," he said, "well-educated, academical men. They may make Baronets of as many Scotch apothecaries as they please, but I shall die by the College. I knew what Dundas came to ask, and I thought I would be even with him." † It was a remarkable observation made by George the Third, after time and experience had taught him a thorough knowledge of mankind, that he had never known a Scotchman speak *ill* of another unless he had a motive for it, and that he had never known one Irishman speak *well* of another, except from a similar selfish inducement. ‡ "In his intercourse with men," he told George Rose, "it had been an invariable rule with him not to suppose them bad till he found them so." §

Although the King was not a professed scholar himself, he was not only fully capable of appreciating genius, but

* The late Lord Wellesley used to relate that the King made the same reply to him, on his preferring a request for a baronetcy for Sir Walter Farquhar, who was so created in 1796. From *private information.*

† Twiss's Life of Lord Eldon, vol. ii. p. 354.

‡ Earl Stanhope's History of England, vol. vii. p. 223. Lord Stanhope, writing in 1854, mentions that this observation was made by the King to an "eminent statesman," then alive. *Ibid.*

§ Rose's Diaries and Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 176.

many instances will be found in these volumes of his conferring favours upon the learned and the scientific. Dr. Johnson, —Sheridan, the lexicographer * — and Home, the author of "Douglas," † with whom in his boyhood he had been associated at the court of his father, Frederick Prince of Wales— were severally indebted to him for pensions, and the author of "The Bard" and of the "Elegy written in a Country Churchyard," for the chair of Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge. On the 3rd of August, 1768, Gray writes to his friend Mr. Nicholls:—"On Wednesday his Grace the Duke of Grafton wrote me a very polite letter to say that his Majesty had commanded him to offer me the vacant Professorship. On Thursday, the King signed the warrant, and next day at his levee I kissed his hand. He made me several gracious speeches which I shall not repeat, because everybody that goes to court does so. Besides, the day was so hot, and the ceremony so embarrassing to me, that I hardly knew what he said." ‡ Again, on the 1st of August, Gray writes to Mason—"On Wednesday, the Duke of Grafton wrote me a very handsome letter to say that the King offered the vacant place to me, with many more speeches too honourable for me to transcribe. On Friday at the levee I kissed his Majesty's hand. What he said I will not tell you, because everybody that has been at court tells what the King said to them. It was very gracious, however." § Gratified, however, as Gray evidently was at

* Hughes's Hist. of England, vol. i. p. 284. 3rd Edition.

† Home's Works, Life by Mackenzie, vol. i. pp. 58, 59.

‡ Gray's Works, vol. iv. p. 125, Aldine Edition.

§ Gray and Mason Correspondence, edited by the Rev. J. Mitford, p. 418. Second Edition. It appears to have been the opinion both of Horace Walpole and of Cole, the antiquary, that the person to whose recommendation Gray was really indebted for the Professorship of Modern History at Cambridge was his friend Mr. Stonehewer, at this time private secretary to the Duke of Grafton. *Gray and Mason Correspondence*, p. 418, *note*. There seems to be little doubt, however, that this graceful tribute to genius emanated from the King himself. See extract of a letter from the King to Lord North in Lord Brougham's *Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol. i. p. 76, *Edition* 1858; and letter from Gray to Mary Antrobus of 29 July 1768, *Gray's Works*, vol. iv. p. 121, *Aldine Edition*.

having been distinguished in so flattering a manner by his Sovereign, he seems to have been not a little discomforted by having to undergo the ordeal of being squeezed, and stared at, at a levee. "Sir Egerton Brydges informed me," writes Mr. Mitford, "that when Gray went to Court to kiss the King's hand for his place, he felt a mixture of shyness and pride which he expressed to some of his intimate friends in terms of strong ill humour."* It may be mentioned that when, only three or four weeks afterwards, the Professorship of Modern History at Oxford also became vacant, the King apparently took as much interest in the filling up of the appointment with credit, as he had done in the case of the sister University. "The King," writes the Duke of Grafton to Bishop Warburton, "has signified his intention that this office should never any more be held as a sinecure."†

Another literary person, with whom we find the King graciously conversing on one of these Court occasions, was the Reverend Thomas Somerville, the historian of the Reigns of William the Third and Queen Anne. The levee, being the second one, only, which the King had held since Hadfield's famous attempt on his life in Drury Lane Theatre, was naturally a crowded one, yet his Majesty found time to address a few flattering words to the almost obscure Scottish divine, who was already indebted to him for a pension. The direct questions put to him by the King were, as Dr. Somerville himself informs us in his agreeable autobiography,—"When did you come to town? Have you come to publish? What subject are you now upon?"‡ The fact is, that at the King's frequent levees his chief gratification seems to have consisted in affording pleasure to others. "His desire to please and oblige," justly observes Sir Walter Scott, "was seconded by a memory tenacious, in a most flat-

* Gray and Mason Correspondence, p. 418, *note*.

† Nichols's Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century, vol. v. p. 655.

‡ "My own Life and Times," by the Rev. T. Somerville, pp. 301, 303.

tering degree, of all the most minute particulars which could interest those who had been once introduced to him." *

Especially favourable to George the Third was the contrast between his manners in his levee-chamber and those exhibited by his unfortunate brother-monarch, Louis the Sixteenth, on similar occasions. According to the accomplished Sir Robert Keith Murray, who was presented to Louis at Fontainebleau in November, 1774—"The King receives the presentations with less attention than one would naturally show to a cat or a dog, because he does not even seem to look at you. I doubt if there is a King of Nègres or a Khan of Tartars so ridiculously uncivil. For us, who know the Emperor and King of Prussia, and who know our own King, who would speak civilly to even a French *captain*, how strange must this appear!" †

Another eminent man, who was deeply indebted to George the Third, was the celebrated astronomer, William Herschel. "The King," writes Madame d'Arblay, "has not a happier subject than this man, who owes wholly to his Majesty that he is not wretched; for such is his eagerness to quit all other pursuits to follow astronomy solely, that he was in danger of ruin, when his talents, and great and uncommon genius, attracted the King's patronage." The King, it appears, not only conferred a pension upon Herschel, but rendered him completely happy, by authorising him to construct a new telescope, according to his own principles, and without any limit as to expense, which the King took entirely upon himself. By these means the astronomer was enabled to pursue, under the most favourable circumstances, his sublime and darling study, and to perfect his wonderful researches and discoveries among the heavenly bodies. So all-absorbing to Herschel was his occupation, that, according to Madame d'Arblay, he had no "wish that had its object in the terres-

* Sir W. Scott's Prose Works, vol. iv. p. 324.
† Memoirs of Sir R. M. Keith, K.B., vol. ii. p. 30

trial globe."* Let us not omit to mention, as additional evidence of the interest taken by George the Third in literature and literary men, that it was by his "express desire" that Thomas Warton was appointed Poet Laureate in 1785,† and, further, that so great a favourite with him was the learned Jacob Bryant, that he frequently carried the Queen with him to visit the venerable philosopher at his humble retreat at Cypenham. "The King," we are told, "sometimes came alone and stayed hours with him."‡

There were, in the last century, two eminent literary men, Dr. Johnson and Dr. Beattie, the author of the "Minstrel," each of whom has bequeathed us a very interesting account of private conversations which they severally held with their Sovereign. The particulars of the celebrated interview between the King and Dr. Johnson, which took place at Buckingham House in February, 1767—the King's anxiety to converse in private with the great philosopher and lexicographer—his admitting himself with that object by a private door into the royal library and stealing upon Johnson, who was seated in a deep reverie by the fire—their long talk about the rival libraries of Oxford and Cambridge; about the controversy between Warburton and Lowth; about Lord Lyttelton's History of Henry the Second; Sir John Hill; the literary and critical Reviews of the day, and the Philosophical Transactions—and lastly, the complacent and characteristic manner in which Johnson subsequently related the details of the interview to Reynolds, Dr. Joseph Warton, and Goldsmith—are incidents which are familiar to every lover of the classical literature of his country. The philosopher appears to have been especially fascinated by the winning address and courtly manners of his Sovereign. To Mr. Barnard, the royal librarian, we find him exclaiming—"Sir, they may

* Madame D'Arblay's Diary and Letters, vol. iii. pp. 129, 130.

† Nichols's Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century, vol. vi. p. 185.

‡ *Ibid.* vol. iv. p. 669; vol. viii. p. 531.

talk of the King as they will, but he is the finest gentleman I have ever seen." To Bennet Langton also Johnson subsequently remarked—"Sir, his manners are those of as fine a gentleman as we may suppose those of Louis the Fourteenth or Charles the Second."* To the mingled grace and dignity of the King's manners similar tribute appears to have been paid by Lord Chatham. "His Majesty," he said to his friends, "is the greatest courtier in his court."†

The King's noble library at Buckingham House appears to have been open, not exclusively to Dr. Johnson, but to every recognised man of literature of the day. Even the Socinian Priestley was, with singular liberality, not refused admission. "If Dr. Priestley"—writes the King to Lord North in February, 1779—"applies to my librarian, he will have permission to see the Library, as other men of Science have had; but I cannot think his character as a politician or Divine deserves my appearing at all in it."‡

The account which the author of the "Minstrel" has bequeathed to us of his interview and conversation with George the Third, is less generally known, though scarcely less interesting, than that of which Dr. Johnson delighted to detail the particulars to his friends. The following is the account which the poet inserts in his Diary:—

"Tuesday, 24th August [1773]:—Set out for Dr. Majendie's § at Kew Green. The doctor told me that he had not seen the King yesterday, but had left a note in writing to intimate that I was to be at his house to-day, and that one of the King's pages had come to him this morning to say that his Majesty would see me a little after twelve. At twelve the doctor and I went to the King's house at Kew. We had been only a few minutes in the hall when the King

* Boswell's Life of Johnson, edited by Croker. Ed. 1848, pp. 184—6.

† Thackeray's Life of Chatham, vol. ii. p. 41.

‡ Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 129. Ed. 1858.

§ The Reverend Henry William Majendie, afterwards successively Bishop of Chester and Bangor. He died in 1830.

and Queen came in from an airing; and, as they passed through the hall, the King called to me by name, and asked how long it was since I came from town. I answered him about an hour. 'I shall see you,' says he, 'in a little while.' The doctor and I waited a considerable time, for the King was busy; and then we were called into a large room, furnished as a library, where the King was walking about, and the Queen sitting in a chair.

"We were received in the most gracious manner possible by both their Majesties. I had the honour of a conversation with them, nobody else being present but Dr. Majendie, for upwards of an hour, on a great variety of topics, in which both the King and Queen joined with a degree of cheerfulness, affability and ease, that was to me surprising, and soon dissipated the embarrassment which I felt at the beginning of the conference.

"They both complimented me in the highest terms on my 'Essay,' which they said was a book they always kept by them; and the King said he had one copy of it at Kew, and another in town, and immediately went and took it down from a shelf. 'I never stole a book but once,' said his Majesty, 'and that was yours'—speaking to me. 'I stole it from the Queen, to give it to Lord Hertford to read.' He had heard that the sale of Hume's Essays had failed since my book was published, and I told him what Mr. Strahan had told me in regard to that matter. He had even heard of my being at Edinburgh last summer, and how Mr. Hume was offended on the score of my book.* He asked many questions about the second part of the 'Essay,' and when it would be ready for the press. I gave him, in a short speech, an account of the plan of it; and said, my health

* The "book" in question was Dr. Beattie's once famous "Essay on Truth," written in opposition to the arguments of Hume and the fashionable scepticism of the day. Though it was the production of neither a profound philosopher nor of a very clever controversialist, such was the fame and success of the "Essay," that five editions of it were disposed of in four years.

was so precarious, I could not tell when it might be ready, as I had many books to consult before I could finish it, but that, if my health were good, I thought I might bring it to a conclusion in two or three years. He asked how long I had been in composing my Essay; praised the caution with which it was written; and said that he did not wonder that it had employed me five or six years.

"He asked about my poems. I said there was only one poem of my own on which I set any value, meaning the 'Minstrel,' and that it was first published about the same time with the 'Essay.' My other poems, I said, were incorrect, being but juvenile pieces, and of little consequence, even in my own opinion. We had much conversation on moral subjects, from which both their Majesties let it appear that they were warm friends to Christianity, and so little inclined to infidelity, that they could hardly believe that any thinking man could really be an atheist, unless he could bring himself to believe that he had made himself; a thought which pleased the King exceedingly, and he repeated it several times to the Queen. He asked whether anything had been written against me. I spoke of the late pamphlet, of which I gave an account; telling him that I never had met with any man that had read it, except one Quaker. This brought on some discourse about the Quakers, whose moderation and mild behaviour the King and Queen commended. I was asked many questions about the Scots Universities, the revenues of the Scots Clergy, their mode of praying and preaching, the medical college of Edinburgh, Dr. Gregory and Dr. Cullen, the length of our vacation at Aberdeen, and the closeness of our attendance during the winter; the number of students that attend my lectures; my mode of lecturing, whether from notes or completely written lectures; about Mr. Hume and Dr. Robertson, and Lord Kinnoul, and the Archbishop of York. His Majesty asked what I thought of my new acquaintance, Lord Dartmouth? I said there

was something in his air and manner, which I thought not only agreeable but enchanting, and that he seemed to me to be one of the best of men; a sentiment in which both their Majesties heartily joined. 'They say that Lord Dartmouth is an enthusiast,' said the King, 'but surely he says nothing on the subject of religion, but what every Christian may and ought to say.'

"He asked whether I did not think the English language on the decline at present? I answered in the affirmative, and the King agreed, and named the 'Spectator' as one of the best standards of the language. When I told him that the Scots clergy sometimes prayed a quarter, or even half an hour, at a time, he asked whether that did not lead them into repetitions? I said it often did. 'That,' said he, 'I do not like in prayers, and excellent as our Liturgy is, I think it somewhat faulty in that respect.' 'Your Majesty knows,' said I, 'that three services are joined in one, in the ordinary church service, which is one cause of these repetitions.' 'True,' he replied, 'and that circumstance also makes the service too long.' From this he took occasion to speak of the composition of the Church liturgy, on which he very justly bestowed the highest commendation. 'Observe,' his Majesty said, 'how flat those occasional prayers are that are now composed, in comparison with the old ones.'

"When I mentioned the smallness of the church livings in Scotland, he said—'He wondered how men of liberal education would choose to become clergymen there,' and asked whether, in the remote parts of the country, the clergy in general were not very ignorant?' I answered, 'No; for that education was very cheap in Scotland, and that the clergy in general were men of good sense and competent learning.' He asked whether we had any good preachers at Aberdeen? I said, yes; and named Campbell and Gerard, with whose names, however, I did not find that he was acquainted. Dr. Majendie mentioned Dr. Oswald's 'Appeal' with commen-

dation. I praised it too, and the Queen took down the name, with a view to send for it. I was asked whether I knew Dr. Oswald? I answered, I did not; and said that my book was published before I read his; that Dr. Oswald was well known to Lord Kinnoul, who had often proposed to make us acquainted.

"We discussed a great many other topics, for the conversation lasted upwards of an hour without any intermission. The Queen bore a large share in it. Both the King and her Majesty showed a great deal of good sense, acuteness, and knowledge, as well as of good-nature and affability. At last the King took out his watch, (for it was now almost three o'clock, his hour of dinner,) which Dr. Majendie and I took as a signal to withdraw. We accordingly bowed to their Majesties, and I addressed the King in these words:—'I hope, Sir, your Majesty will pardon me, if I take this opportunity to return you my humble and most grateful acknowledgments for the honour you have been pleased to confer upon me.' He immediately answered—'I think I could do no less for a man who has done so much service for the good of Christianity. I shall always be glad of an opportunity to show the good opinion I have of you.'

"The Queen," concludes Dr. Beattie, "sat all the while, and the King stood, sometimes walking about a little. Her Majesty speaks the English language with surprising elegance, and little or nothing of a foreign accent, so that, if she were only of the rank of a private gentlewoman, one could not help taking notice of her as one of the most agreeable women in the world. Her face is much more pleasing than any of her pictures, and, in the expression of her eyes, and in her smile, there is something peculiarly engaging." *

The King's kindness to the author of the "Minstrel"

* Sir W. Forbes' Life of Dr. Beattie, vol. i. pp. 347—354.

amounted to more than words; his Majesty having, four days previously to their interview at Kew, conferred upon him a pension of two hundred a year. Another Scottish Divine and eminent literary man who, about this period, received substantial favours at the hands of his Sovereign, was the celebrated Divine, Dr. Hugh Blair. When, on the 7th of April, 1762, the King—"with that wise attention to the interests of religion and literature which distinguishes his reign"—"munificently erected and endowed" a Professorship of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in the University of Edinburgh, it was Dr. Blair whom he selected to be the Regius Professor.* Moreover, eighteen years afterwards, we find the Queen, "on account of the pleasure which she had derived from reading his sermons," obtaining for him a pension of two hundred a year.†

Dr. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, although a disappointed Whig, and for this, and other reasons, not very likely to be prejudiced in the King's favour, has nevertheless done justice to what he styles the "quickness and intelligence" of his royal master. As an instance he relates the following anecdote. The King happened to be one day conversing at the levee with the Duke of Richmond, then Master General of the Ordnance, when the conversation turning on a new and beneficial process in the manufacture of gunpowder, the Duke thought it right to intimate to his Majesty that his right reverend friend, who was standing at the time in the royal circle, was the author of the improvement. The Bishop, somewhat abashed, stammered out a few remarks on the scandal which might attach to a Christian Bishop for instructing mankind in the art of destroying one another. "Do not let that distress you," said the King,

* "Short Account of the Life of Dr. Hugh Blair, D.D., by James Finlayson, D.D.," appended to Blair's Sermons, vol. v. p. 462; Chalmers's Gen. Biog. Dict. Art. Blair.

† The pension was conferred on Dr. Blair on the 25th of July 1780. Finlayson's Short Account," &c., *ut supra*, p. 464.

"for the quicker the conflict, the less the slaughter."—"I mention this," adds the Bishop, "to do justice to the King, whose understanding it was the fashion to decry." *

The Bishop has recorded another rather remarkable conversation which he held with his Sovereign at the levee, in the month of November, 1787. "I was standing," he says, "next to a Venetian nobleman. The King was conversing with him about the Republic of Venice, and, hastily turning to me, said—'There now; you hear what he says about a Republic.' My answer was—'Sir, I look upon a Republic as one of the worst forms of Government.' The King gave me, as he thought, another blow about a Republic. I answered that I could not live under a Republic. His Majesty still pursued the subject. I thought myself insulted, and firmly said—'Sir, I look upon the tyranny of any one man to be an intolerable evil, and upon the tyranny of a hundred to be a hundred times as bad.' The King went off. His Majesty, I doubt not, had given credit to the calumnies, which the court-insects had buzzed into his ears, of my being a favourer of republican principles, because I was known to be a supporter of Revolution principles, and had a pleasure in telling me what he thought of me." †

The Bishop lived to earn the gratitude of his Sovereign. Five years afterwards, when the doctrines broached by the French revolutionists were not only spreading rapidly over Europe, but when the common people, in every village in England, were talking wildly about liberty and equality, the Bishop published a sermon which had a considerable share in allaying the ferment.‡ Highly gratified at the con-

* Bishop Watson's Anecdotes of his Own Life, vol. i. p. 242.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 314.

‡ "The Wisdom and Goodness of God, in having made both Rich and Poor." The Bishop at a later period reiterated his fear and dislike of French Republican principles in a publication entitled,—"The Substance of a Speech intended to have been spoken in the House of Lords, November 22, 1803."

duct of the Whig prelate, the King not only spoke of the sermon to the Archbishop of Canterbury in terms of high praise, but when the Bishop next made his appearance at the levee, the King personally expressed to him the strong and grateful sense which he entertained of the service which he had rendered to monarchy, as well as to the community at large. "Sir," said the Bishop, "I love to come forward in a moment of danger."—"I see you do," replied the King, "and it is a mark of a man of high spirit." * It was on the occasion of Bishop Watson publishing his "Apology for Christianity," that George the Third made his well-known remark, that "he never before was aware that Christianity stood in need of any apology."

The following brief account of a levee-scene at St. James's, from the pen of another literary Prelate, the celebrated Bishop Warburton, although it be of less value as bearing upon the story of George the Third, than as being characteristic of the Bishop himself, is nevertheless worthy of notice. "I brought as usual," writes the Bishop on the 20th of February, 1767, "a bad cold with me to town, and, this being the first day I ventured out of doors, it was employed, as in duty bound, at Court, it being a levee-day. A *buffoon-lord in waiting*—you may guess whom I mean—was very busy marshalling the circle, and he said to me without ceremony—'Move forward! you clog up the doorway.' I replied with as little—'Did nobody clog up the King's doorway more than I have, *there would be room for all honest men.*' This brought the man to himself. When the King came up to me he asked—'Why I did not come to town before?' I said—'I understood there was no business going forward in the House in which I could be of service to his

* Bishop Watson's Anecdotes of his Own Life, vol. i. pp. 438, 439. "His Majesty's reception of me at his levee, to which I went once, or at the most twice, a year," writes the Whig prelate, "was always so complimentary that, *notwithstanding the pestilent prevalence of court duplicity*, I cannot bring myself to believe that he was my enemy." *Ibid.* p. 439.

Majesty.' He replied—'He supposed the severe storm of snow would have brought me up.' I replied—'I was under cover of a very warm house.' You see by all this how unfit I am for Courts." *

The circumstance is rather a notable one, that, of the persons who had the most reason to dislike or to be disliked by George the Third, two at least should have borne pleasing testimony, the one to his intelligence, and the other to his virtues. "Wilkes," writes Butler the "Reminiscent," "thought highly of the talents and firmness of the late King, and was persuaded that a Ministry protected by him could not, without some singular blunder, or some event singularly unlucky, be shaken by any Opposition." †—"I believe," writes Benjamin Franklin, "that had the King had a bad character, and Wilkes a good one, the latter might have turned the former out of his kingdom." ‡ Again Franklin writes during the London riots in May, 1768—"What the event will be, God only knows. But some punishment seems preparing for a People who are ungratefully abusing the best Constitution and the best King any nation was ever blessed with." §

* Nichols's Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century, vol. v. p. 645.
† Butler's Reminiscences, p. 74.
‡ Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. ii. p. 158.
§ Grahame's Hist. of the United States, vol. iv. p. 453.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Failure of Lord North's proposals for conciliating the North American Colonists—Franklin's return to America—Burke's Conciliatory Resolutions rejected in the House of Commons by a large majority—Infatuation of the British Ministers—Agitation in the Colonies—Collision at Lexington, Massachusetts—"Battle of Concord"—Disastrous retreat of the British to Boston.

In the mean time, affairs in America had been exciting the deepest interest, as well in Great Britain as amongst the Colonists themselves. While the oppressive Act for restraining the trade of New England was still passing through its various stages in the British Parliament, Lord North, to the astonishment of the House of Commons, and even of some of his own colleagues, intimated that he had a conciliatory plan of his own to submit to the House. The British Legislature, he premised, would never yield up the principle that it had the right to tax America. Let the Colonial Assemblies, however, consent and promise to make proper provision towards the common defence of the Empire, for the maintenance of civil government in America and the administration of justice, and Great Britain, on her part, would guarantee to impose no more taxes on America, unless for the regulation of commerce. Such was the spirit of the conciliatory scheme, which, in the form of a resolution, Lord North submitted to the House of Commons. Whether, he said, any of the Colonies would return to their allegiance on these terms, he was unable to say. It was, however, both

wise and humane to give them the option; and, "if they rejected them," he added, "their blood must be on their own head."

Had this resolution been proposed at an earlier period of the disputes between the two countries, it might, not impossibly, have produced a healing effect. Under present circumstances, however, it was little better than a mockery. "It is a mere verbiage;" writes Lord Chatham to Lord Mahon, "a most puerile mockery that will be spurned in America, as well as laughed at here by the friends of America, and by the unrelenting enemies of that noble country."* For instance, it still retained on the Statute Book the offensive assertion of right on the part of the parent-country to tax her Colonies. It left to the decision, not of the Assemblies of the different Provinces, but of the Crown, the amount of funds which they were to be required to contribute towards the defence of the Empire; and, lastly, any favourable impression which it might otherwise have produced on the minds of the American people, was certain to be nullified by the recent odious Bill for ruining their commerce and trade, which the same packet would probably carry across the Atlantic. It was like a man, said Franklin, with an olive-branch in one hand and a sword in the other. That Lord North's proposition would have been more ample and liberal, but for the opposition which he anticipated from the Bedford section of his party, there seems good reason to believe. Indeed, as it was, the fact of that party voting with the friends of high prerogative had threatened to place the Minister in a minority. "Last Monday," writes Gibbon, "a conciliatory motion of allowing the colonies to tax themselves was introduced by Lord North, in the midst of lives and fortunes, war and famine. We went into the House in confusion, every moment expecting that the Bedfords would fly into rebellion against those measures. Lord North rose six times to appease the storm, but all in vain; till at length Sir Gilbert

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. p. 403.

[Elliot] declared for Administration, and the troops all rallied under the proper standard." * "The Bedford party," writes the American historian, "threatened to vote against the Minister, till Sir Gilbert Elliot, the well-known friend of the King, brought to his aid the royal influence, and secured for the motion a large majority." †

This amiable, however inadequate endeavour to conciliate the Americans, originated, there is every reason to believe, in the King. His principal confidants would seem to have been Lord North, Sir Gilbert Elliot, and Admiral Earl Howe. There was at this time no private family in England with whom the King associated on more affectionate terms, than with the members of the house of Howe. For the Earl, and for his charming and accomplished sister, Mrs. Howe, he ever entertained the strongest respect and regard. By the marriage of their father, Emanuel, second Viscount Howe, with Mary Sophia Kielmansegge, a natural daughter of George the First, they were first cousins once removed to the King. Moreover, the fact of the Earl's mother having been Lady of the Bedchamber to Augusta Princess of Wales had probably improved the intimacy between the two families. When therefore we discover so intimate a friend of the King as Lord Howe seeking clandestine interviews with Franklin — when we remember that his lordship held important office as Treasurer of the Navy, and that Franklin, on the other hand, was not only regarded by the high prerogative party as a rebel, but that he lived in daily apprehension of arrest —and, lastly, when we find that the object of their interviews was the conciliation of the American Colonies—we have surely a right to presume that so cautious and sagacious a nobleman as Lord Howe would never have undertaken so delicate a negotiation, unless expressly desired and

* Letter to Mr. Holroyd, February 1775; Gibbon's Misc. Works, p. 268.

† Bancroft's Hist. of the United States, vol. vii. p. 243. Boston, 1860. The numbers on the division were 274 to 88.

instructed by his sovereign. No one, indeed, can read the interesting accounts which Franklin has bequeathed us of those interviews, without, we think, being satisfied that the King was the promoter of them. A game of chess with the lady of the mansion was the ostensible cause of Franklin's visits to Grafton Street. To confer in private with Lord Howe on American affairs was the real and important motive. What, enquired Mrs. Howe of him over their chess-board, were the real and substantive grounds of quarrel between Great Britain and America? There were no "clashing interests," was the pithy reply. "It was rather a matter of punctilio—which two or three sensible people might settle in half an hour." *

To the mortification of the illustrious American, this, his last attempt to obtain redress for his suffering fellow-countrymen, came to nothing. He had by this time, to use his own words, ceased to entertain a hope that the destinies of America would be "rescued out of the mangling hands of the present set of blundering Ministers." † He had attended, and for the last time listened, in the House of Lords, to Ministerial depreciatons of "American courage, religion, and understanding." England, instead of adopting his views, threatened him with a prison, and accordingly he prepared to return to his native country—insulted, mortified, disappointed. One of the last visits which he paid was to Edmund Burke, on the day previous to his finally quitting London.‡ Mournfully he predicted the impending separation between the mother-country and her Colonies.

* Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. p. 441. See also Jefferson's Memoirs and Correspondence, vol. i. pp. 93—4. "The King," writes Franklin in 1772, "has lately been heard to speak of me with regard." Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. p. 350.

† *Ibid.* p. 435.

‡ Prior's Life of Burke, vol. i. p. 306. Franklin arrived at Philadelphia on the 4th of May, to the great satisfaction of his fellow-countryman.

"Welcome once more
To these fair western plains, thy native shore!
Here live beloved!

America, he said, had enjoyed happier days under the rule of Great Britain than possibly she might ever enjoy again. He lamented the separation, but, he added, it was inevitable. When, nineteen months afterwards, Franklin next visited Europe, it was in the proud capacity of Minister Plenipotentiary from the American Congress to the Court of France. "In regard to this event," writes Lord Rockingham, "I cannot refrain from paying my tribute of admiration to the vigour, magnanimity, and determined resolution of the old man. The horrid scene at *a Privy Council* is in my memory, though perhaps not in his. It may not excite his conduct. It certainly deters him not. He boldly ventures to cross the Atlantic in an American little frigate, and risks the dangers of being taken, and being once more brought before an implacable tribunal. The sight of Banquo's ghost could not more offend the eyes of Macbeth, than the knowledge of this old man being at Versailles should affect the minds of those who were principals in that horrid scene." *

Burke appears to have been more sanguine than Franklin in regard to American affairs, and accordingly, not many days after the departure of his friend, he moved in the House of Commons a series of propositions as the basis for conciliation between Great Britain and America. His speech on this occasion is said to have been one of the finest ever delivered within the walls of Parliament; yet it produced no more favourable results than had been effected by the close reasonings and experience of Pownall, or by the fervid eloquence of Chatham. No fewer than two hundred and seventy members, against seventy-eight, voted in favour of tyranny and subjugation. Well might Burke exclaim in the course

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Why staid apostate Wedderburn behind,
The scum, the scorn, the scoundrel of mankind?"

"Rivington's Gazetteer," May 4, 1775, quoted in Moore's Diary of the American Revolution, vol. i. p. 74.

* Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. pp. 301—2.

of his memorable oration—"A great empire and little minds go but ill together."—"Pacification with America," writes Walpole to Mann, "is not the measure adopted. More regiments are ordered thither. They are bold Ministers, methinks, who do not hesitate on a civil war, in which victory may bring ruin, and disappointment endanger their heads." *

Thus gradually began to die away most of the remaining hopes entertained by the wise and the far-sighted, of being able to avert the horrors of civil war and the dismemberment of the Empire. Henceforth, the question at issue between the two countries was reduced to the simple, but momentous proposition, whether Great Britain was to subjugate her Colonies, or whether the Colonies were to achieve their Independence. Such was the view which was taken of the subject by the French Court; and, indeed, with the exception of the British Ministers and the country gentlemen, such was the view which was beginning to be adopted on either side of the Atlantic.

There were two points, connected with American affairs, on which the imaginations of Lord North and his colleagues appear to have run completely wild. In the first place, it was still their conviction that the Colonists, instead of fighting, would be easily frightened into submission; and secondly they were no less satisfied that the affection, which the Americans still professed for the mother-country, was nothing but a feint, and that Independence had long been the end and aim of their leading men. How completely American valour subsequently gave the lie to the former conviction it is needless to observe. Nor was the second proposition, cruelly reflecting, as it did, on the sincerity of the straightforward founders of the American Republic, less unsound than the first. For instance, when, in the preceding

* Walpole's Letters, vol. vi. p. 183; Edition 1858.

month of October, the high-minded Washington expressed his conviction "that no such thing as Independence was desired by any thinking man in America," is it conceivable that he was inditing a deliberate untruth?* Again, when Franklin gave the same solemn assurance to Lord Chatham, is it credible that he was wilfully deceiving the staunchest champion and friend of American liberty and of the American people? "I assure your Lordship," were Franklin's words, "that having more than once travelled almost from one end of the Continent to the other, and kept a great variety of company—eating, drinking, and conversing with them freely—I never heard in any conversation from any person, drunk or sober, the least expression of a wish for a separation, or hint that such a thing would be advantageous to America." Did Jefferson tell an untruth when he wrote—"Before the 19th of April 1775, I never heard a whisper of a disposition to separate from Great Britain?" Or was John Adams similarly guilty of an untruth when, in March 1775, he wrote of the people of Massachusetts—"That there are any who pant after Independence is the greatest slander on the province?" "It is our greatest wish and inclination, as well as interest, to continue our connexion with, and dependence upon, the British Government"—were the words of the famous Resolution which, at the suggestion of Washington, was adopted by the people of Fairfax county, Virginia.† No!—The

* Again Washington writes in 1774;—"Give me leave to add—and I think I can announce it as a fact—that it is not the wish or interest of that government [Massachusetts,] or of any other upon this Continent, separately or collectively to set up for Independence." *Sparks's Life of Washington*, vol. i. p. 131. Indeed, so late as the first of April 1776, only three months before America declared her Independence, Washington writes to Joseph Reed—"My countrymen, I know from their form of government and steady attachment heretofore to royalty, will come reluctantly into the idea of Independence; but time and persecution bring many wonderful things to pass." *Washington's Writings, by Sparks*, vol. iii. p. 347.

† Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. pp. 435—6; Bancroft's Hist. of the United States, vol. vii. p. 301; Boston, 1860; Washington's Writings, edited by Sparks, vol. ii., Appendix, p. 490.

Independence of America sprang not from premeditation nor intrigue. There may, indeed, have been a few of the more exasperated or ambitious of her sons, who, looking forward to the future greatness of their country, already aspired to throw off the yoke of the parent-land; but as yet such had not been the desire of the wisest and the best. The Revolution, now fast approaching, was not of the Americans' seeking. It was instigated neither by false patriots, nor by mob-orators, nor by dreaming political enthusiasts. The wrongs from which it sprang were neither imaginary, nor were they ordinary wrongs. It was the universal rising of a sagacious and a loyal people * in defence of their chartered liberties and their lives—a solemn appeal to the God of Battles to defend and uphold the right. "Our conduct," writes Horace Walpole to General Conway, "has been that of pert children. We have thrown a pebble at a mastiff, and are surprised it was not frightened." †

In the mean time, the news of the arbitrary proceedings of the British Legislature had greatly increased the ferment in America. All eyes, as formerly, were turned towards Massachusetts, and especially towards the people of Boston. In that city a dismal winter had been passed—by the British regiments, on the one side, in inglorious inactivity, and by the leading-men of the province in providing fire-arms, collecting military stores, and increasing their Militia, or Minute Men, who now amounted to several thousands. The sight of the soldiers fortifying Boston Neck had kept their exasperation constantly alive. A mere accident—the loss of a single life in a scuffle—might at any moment kindle civil war throughout the whole continent of America.

Spring had scarcely set in, before such an occasion actually

* At a dinner given at New York on the 5th of July to General Wooster and the officers of the Connecticut corps, we find the first toast proposed and drunk to be—"The King." *Moore's Diary of the American Revolution*, vol. i. p. 107.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. vi. p. 159.

occurred. Intelligence having reached General Gage that a large magazine of military stores had been formed by the Americans at Concord—an inland town, about twenty miles from Boston—he determined, at the repeated solicitations, it is said, of the American loyalists in Massachusetts,* at once to effect either its capture or destruction. Accordingly, on the night of the 18th of April, a secret expedition, consisting of about eight hundred Grenadiers, Light Infantry, and Marines, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Smith of the Tenth Regiment, were carried in boats across the Charles River to East Cambridge. "They will miss their aim," said a mysterious voice from amongst the byestanders. "What aim?"—hastily enquired a British officer, Earl Percy. "Why, the cannon at Concord," was the reply. Lord Percy instantly flew to communicate the words to General Gage, when immediate orders were given for preventing any American quitting the town; but it was found impossible to carry them into effect. Already two high-spirited young men, mounted on fleet horses, were making the best of their way to Concord; knocking at the house-doors of the different villages through which they galloped, and communicating to the inhabitants the intelligence of the advance of the British troops. Already, with far greater rapidity than the speed of horses, a mysterious light, streaming from the steeple of one of the Boston churches, was promulgating, far and wide, that peril was at hand. Then, too, fell on the ears of the astonished soldiery the sound of the ringing of bells and the distant firing of cannon. Even to the youngest soldier, it must have been evident that their purpose had transpired; that the sounds to which he listened were the signals for rousing up the Minute Men† from their beds; and that, before daylight, an overpowering force might possibly attack

* Gordon's Hist. of the American Revolution, vol. i. p. 477.

† So called, it is said, from their being pledged to rush to the post of danger at a minute's notice.

them and even cut off their retreat.* Nevertheless Colonel Smith, in pursuance of his orders, continued his eventful march.

The troops had pushed on some miles beyond Boston, when Colonel Smith deemed it prudent to send forward six companies of Light Infantry, under the command of Major Pitcairn of the Royal Marines, for the purpose of securing one or two bridges which it was indispensable for his men to cross. It was five o'clock in the morning when the advanced party reached the village of Lexington, at that time containing about seven hundred inhabitants. Here, by the dim light which was just beginning to dawn, Major Pitcairn perceived a body of militia, to the amount of about seventy men, drawn up on the village green by the roadside, armed and wearing military accoutrements. With what object they were there, with this hostile demonstration, unless for the purpose of attacking, or of inviting an attack, from the British, we confess we are at a loss to determine. Even their historians, though they insist that their intentions were peaceful, do not deny that their pieces were loaded. Under all the circumstances, it seems only natural that Major Pitcairn should have ridden up to them and enquired the object of their being there. This, according to the American accounts, he did in an insufferably insolent manner, crying out to them—"Disperse, you rebels!— D——n you! Throw down your arms and disperse!" † This demand, it is said, not being instantly complied with, Pitcairn, having first of

* The Massachusetts Committee of Safety and Supplies had, by their votes on the 14th of the preceding month, provided for such an occasion as now occurred. "Voted—That Members from this Committee belonging to the towns of Charlestown, Cambridge, and Roxbury, be desired, at the Province expense, to procure at least two men for a Watch every night to be placed in each of those towns; and that the said Members be in readiness to send Couriers forward to the Towns where the Magazines are placed, when sallies are made from the Army by night." It was also voted that similar instructions should be sent to Colonel Barret at Concord. *American Archives published by Authority of Congress, fourth Series*, vol. i. col. 1370.

† American Archives, fourth Series, vol. ii. col. 391.

all discharged his own pistol, gave the order to his men to fire, an order which was only too promptly and effectually obeyed. "Then and not till then," writes their historian, "did a few of them, on their own impulse, return the British fire. These random shots of fugitives, or dying men, did no harm, except that Pitcairn's horse was perhaps grazed, and a private of the 10th Light Infantry was touched slightly in the leg." * Seven of the militia were killed, and nine wounded.

Such is the American account of the skirmish at Lexington—an account certainly differing very materially from that which was subsequently drawn up by Colonel Smith for the information of General Gage and the British Government. "I understand," writes the Colonel, "from the report of Major Pitcairn, *and from many officers*, that they found on a green, close to the road, a body of the country-people drawn up in military order, with arms and accoutrements, and, as appeared after, loaded; and that they had posted some men in a dwelling and meeting-house. Our troops advanced towards them, without any intention of injuring them, further than to enquire the reason of their being thus assembled, and, if not satisfactory, to have secured their arms. But they in confusion went off, principally to the left; only one of them fired before he went off, and three or four more jumped over a wall, and fired from behind it among the soldiers, on which the troops returned it, and killed several of them. They likewise fired on the soldiers from the meeting and dwelling-house. We had one man wounded, and Major Pitcairn's horse shot in two places." †

* Bancroft's Hist. of the United States, vol. vii. p. 293; American Archives, fourth Series, vol. ii. col. 363, 370, 392.

† Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. vi., Appendix, p. ix.; London Gazette 6 to 10 June 1775. See also a despatch transmitted by General Gage to the Earl of Dunmore, in the American Archives, fourth Series, vol. ii. col. 436–7. "Major Pitcairn," according to another account, "called upon them to disperse, and on attempting to surround and disarm them, *they fired upon our troops;* upon which the light infantry, *without being ordered*, fired and killed several of the country-people."

Accounts so different there is certainly great difficulty in reconciling. In the first place, that a body of half-disciplined countrymen should have commenced an attack on a detachment of British troops, who were not only highly organized, but superior to themselves in number, is to say the least improbable; while on the other hand, no less difficult is it to question the veracity of an official report of a British Officer of high position; more especially as he had taken no part in the melancholy affray, and consequently could have no personal motive for misrepresenting the fact.

It was about seven o'clock, on a beautiful spring morning, that the British troops marched into the excited town of Concord. The only force which seemed to threaten to dispute their advance was a body of about two hundred exasperated Militia men who were posted on a neighbouring eminence, but who, perceiving how inferior they were in numbers to the regulars, withdrew at their approach to the distance of about half a mile, where they waited for reinforcements. Paying no attention to this body of men, further than detaching about an hundred soldiers to occupy the bridge across the Concord River, Colonel Smith commenced his search for the cannon, and other warlike stores, of which he had come in quest. The Americans, however, had been allowed time to bury the one, and to carry off the greater portion of the other, and consequently the paltry destruction of about sixty barrels of powder and five hundred pounds of ball—the spiking of three pieces of artillery, and the burning of the Tree of Liberty and some gun-carriages—were all the advantages for which, to use the words of the American historian, General Gage "precipitated a Civil War."* "Private dwellings," according to the same authority, "were rifled;" but so far from any such outrage having been sanctioned by

Nicolas's Historical Record of the Royal Marines, p. 79. These statements tend altogether to exonerate Major Pitcairn from the charge of rash and violent conduct.

* Bancroft's Hist. of the United States, vol. vii. p. 300.

Colonel Smith, we find, from his despatch to General Gage, that both he and Major Pitcairn did their utmost to allay the apprehensions of the inhabitants, by explaining to them the true and only object of their visit to Concord. "We had opportunities," writes the Colonel, "of convincing them of our good intentions, but they were sulky, and one of them even struck Major Pitcairn." *

In the mean time, by the pouring into Concord of numbers of armed men from the neighbouring farm-houses and villages, the party of American Militia—which we have mentioned as having retired at the approach of the redcoats—had been increased to about four hundred. In front of them, almost within gun-shot, was presented the irritating spectacle of an hundred British soldiers occupying, and standing at their arms, upon the town bridge; while, further off, was seen the smoke arising from the burning gun-carriages and Tree of Liberty. For some length of time the leading Americans stood apart in anxious consultation. It was, in fact, no light responsibility to fall to the lot of three or four peaceful individuals, to be suddenly called upon to decide on the alternative of either remaining passive spectators of the destruction of their property and the invasion of their rights, or else, by offering resistance to the King's troops, probably plunge their country into a civil war. In front of them, almost inviting attack, was ranged an isolated detachment of the redoubtable British Infantry. To induce the redcoats to fire in the first instance, instead of being themselves the aggressors,—to follow up their success, should they prove victorious, by pursuing, harassing, attacking, and if possible annihilating, the remainder of the British force while on its return to Boston—appear to have

* Colonel Smith's despatch; Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. vi., Appendix, p. 10. See also Holmes's American Annals, vol. ii. p. 272, *note*, where an anecdote is related of great forbearance on the part of a British officer, tending strongly to the presumption that private property was spared on the occasion.

been the plan of operations which was agreed upon by this little Council of War. At all events, the word was presently given to advance, when the whole body, having previously received the strictest commands not to be the first to fire, marched directly towards the bridge. As their pace was a rapid one, and as their intentions and attitude were to all appearance hostile, surely the British, if they were the first to fire, are not to be too severely blamed. "On their coming pretty near," writes Colonel Smith, "one of our men fired on them, which they returned." It was not, however, till the British had poured in a volley upon them, nor till after the lapse of many seconds, that the return-fire came from the American side. For a moment, indeed, it seemed to be a question with the latter whether to fight or fly, when their enthusiastic leader, Major John Buttrick* of Concord, leaped impetuously forward, exclaiming—"Fire, fellow soldiers! For God's sake, fire!" Had they continued to hesitate, the liberties of America might have been crushed for a time, and her Independence postponed for another century. That voice, however, acted like a spell. The words—"Fire! fire! fire! flew from mouth to mouth," and instantaneously a volley was discharged at the British, which killed two of them and wounded several others. Then ensued a short conflict which was followed by the discomfiture of the redcoats, who, outnumbered by as many as four to one, retreated in confusion, and apparently panic-struck, to the main body of their comrades, leaving the bridge in the possession of the Americans. Such were the chief incidents associated with that momentous conflict, upon which the Americans, with a pardonable vanity, have conferred the

* Major Buttrick subsequently received a Colonel's Commission and served with credit during the Revolutionary war. "On his decease, his funeral was attended by military honours. A procession, with appropriate music, moved over the very ground where he had led his soldiers to action; and the entire scene was the most solemn and impressive ever known in Concord." *Holmes's American Annals*, vol. ii. p. 272, *note*. A handsome granite monument, commemorative of the events of the day, now stands upon the spot.

stately title of the Battle of Concord. "This," writes the historian, "is the world-renowned BATTLE OF CONCOR more eventful than Agincourt or Blenheim." *

It was noon when Colonel Smith and his men commenc retracing their steps to Boston. The road, which his troo had to traverse, was a hilly and zigzag one, winding throug forests and brushwood, and occasionally between defile By this time the whole of the surrounding country had ris against the British. Great numbers of armed men can pouring in from all quarters, each of them intent on bringi to the earth a British soldier. No sooner, consequently, d the royal forces commence their retreat, than they fou themselves exposed to an incessant and galling fire. It w to no purpose that, facing about, they endeavoured to bri their assailants to a close encounter. From thickets an ditches, and from behind stone walls, an irregular fire wa kept up, which, with scarcely five minutes' interruption, was continued for eighteen miles. Not a rock, not a tree, but was taken advantage of to harass the retreating force. Although scarcely half a dozen Americans were at any one moment to be seen together, the occasional density of the galling fire evinced how numerous were the assailants. The British had commenced their retreat in good order. Previously, however, to their reaching Lexington, it was converted almost into a flight. Their ammunition, by this time, was nearly expended; the wounded had begun to drop from lassitude and loss of blood; the flanking-parties had become too fatigued to be able any longer to discharge their duties with proper effect. Even the American writers admit that the Officers behaved admirably; yet, but for the promptitude of General Gage, all their gallantry, and all their efforts to form their men, would have been to no purpose. Intelligence having reached him of the opposition which the

* Bancroft's Hist. of the United States, vol. vii. p. 303; Boston, 1860.

troops had met with at Lexington, he instantly sent forward a reinforcement, consisting of eight companies of the 4th, the same number of the 23rd and 49th Regiments, with some Marines and two field-pieces. This Detachment, which was under the command of Earl Percy, happily reached Lexington at a most critical moment, when the fire of the Provincials was the fiercest, and when a disorderly flight on the part of the royal troops seemed to be almost inevitable. The British artillery immediately opened fire upon the enemy, under the protection of which Lord Percy formed his brigade into a hollow square, into which he received his wounded and exhausted fellow-soldiers. Never did a military reinforcement arrive at a more opportune moment. Such, we are assured, was the pitiable condition of the hunted British soldiers, that "their tongues were hanging out of their mouths, like those of dogs after a chase." *

But, though the British had been reinforced by their friends, their condition, on resuming their march, proved to be scarcely less perilous than it had previously been. The number of their foes had increased to a very formidable amount. Armed men had continued to pour in by hundreds from the surrounding towns and villages. The old, as well as the young, had seized their guns. One and all were bent on the extermination of the redcoats. In vain the British Officers, mortified and exasperated at the humiliating character of the conflict, made renewed attempts to bring on a close encounter. "Notwithstanding the enemy's numbers," writes Colonel Smith to Governor Gage, "they did not make one gallant attempt during so long an action." But far it was from being the policy of the half-disciplined peasantry of Massachusetts to contend at close quarters with the redoubtable British Infantry. To the keen-eyed marksmen of the soil, every familiar tree and every ditch was a forti-

* Holmes's American Annals, vol. ii. p. 273, *note*.

fication; when cover was wanting they raised breastworks of shingle, or, lying down to load their guns at one place, fired it off from another. Thus pursued and harassed by their merciless assailants—their ammunition again beginning to fail and all but the strongest beginning to sink from fatigue—great indeed must have been the satisfaction of the British when, shortly before sunset, the town and harbour of Charlestown appeared in sight. During the day Lord Percy's brigade had marched thirty miles in ten hours; Smith and his detachment had retreated eighteen miles in six hours. Fortunately some British ships of war lay in the harbour of Charlestown, and accordingly under the protection of their guns the fugitives were enabled to cross Charles River, and to reach Boston without further molestation. Altogether, the loss to the British was less perhaps than might have been anticipated. It amounted, in killed, wounded, and missing, to two hundred and seventy-three. The loss to the Americans was eighty-eight.*

Such was the disastrous result of General Gage's ill-advised expedition to Concord. When the sun had risen on the morning of the 19th of April, there had probably not been half a dozen persons in Massachusetts who had anticipated that before night-time a single hostile shot would be fired. At noon on that day a splendid detachment of British troops had marched gaily out of Boston; their band striking up the tune of "Yankee Doodle," † and the officers boasting

* "The troops not being able to stand it," writes an American eye-witness, "were obliged to continue the retreat, which they did with the bravery becoming British soldiers."——"I stood upon the hills in town and saw the engagement very plain, which was very bloody for seven hours; and it is conjectured that one half of the soldiers at least are killed." *American Archives, fourth Series*, vol. ii. col. 360. "We could see the flashes," writes another eye-witness, "and hear the reports of the guns for hours; the warmest fire being about two miles from the town, where only water parted us." *Ibid.* col. 361.

† "The Brigade under Lord Percy," writes the Rev. William Gordon of Roxbury, "marched out playing by way of contempt, 'Yankee Doodle.' They were afterwards told that they had been made to dance to it." *American Archives, fourth Series*, vol. ii. col. 627.

that at the mere sight of the Grenadiers' caps the "rebels" would take to their heels. Yet, before the evening-gun had been fired, not only were those gallant men to be seen flocking back to their quarters, jaded and foot-sore, but from that time they found themselves prisoners in Boston. Gage, in order to prevent his troops being driven into the sea, had now no option but to fortify the place as expeditiously as possible.

Thus may be said to have commenced the great American war of Independence! Thus also was fulfilled a remarkable prediction, delivered by the Marquis de Montcalm previously to his encountering Wolfe on the Heights of Abraham! "If Wolfe beats me," he wrote, "France has lost America utterly. One's only consolation is that, in ten years farther, America will be in revolt against England." *

> "'The child that is unborn shall rue
> The *hunting* of that day—'"

was Walpole's poetic, but not less apt, prediction on hearing the news. Walpole, in fact, with all his frivolity, conceived a very wise and prescient view of the consequences of Great Britain going to war with her Colonies. "Probably," he writes on the 7th of September, "the war will be long. On the side of England it must be attended with ruin. If England prevails, English and American liberty is at an end. If the Colonies prevail, our commerce is gone. And if, at last, we negotiate, they will neither forgive, nor give us our former advantages."—"They" [the Americans] continues Walpole, "openly talk of our tyranny and folly with horror and contempt, and perhaps with amazement; and so does every foreign Minister here, as well as Frenchman." †

* Carlyle's Hist. of Frederick the Great, vol. v. p. 557.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. vi. pp. 250, 251. Ed. 1857; Walpole, it is expedient to mention, was at this time at Paris.

The people of Massachusetts, having once drawn the sword, determined to throw away the scabbard. The Congress of the province not only voted that General Gage, by his conduct, had rendered himself no longer entitled to their obedience, but also unanimously passed a proposition for raising a New England Army of thirty thousand men, of which number they guaranteed to furnish, as their own proportion, thirteen thousand six hundred. Within an incredibly short space of time Boston was invested by twenty thousand armed men. The British officers had the mortification to find themselves cooped up in an ignominious confinement; fear of the American marksmen keeping them within their quarters.

In the mean time, very exaggerated accounts of the unhappy collisions at Lexington and Concord had gradually spread horror and consternation over the American Continent. From the hour that the tidings of those events went forth, the authority of Great Britain over her colonies became virtually at an end. America, it was evident, must now declare, and do battle for, her independence. "With one impulse," writes the American historian, "the Colonies sprang to arms. With one spirit they pledged themselves to each other to be ready for the extreme event. With one heart, the Continent cried, 'Liberty or Death.'" *

Such continued to be the state of public feeling in America, when, on the 10th of May, the Continental Congress met for the second time at Philadelphia, "the City," as its inhabitants

* Bancroft's Hist. of the United States, vol. vii. p. 312. The following anecdote, which appeared in the "Pennsylvania Packet," June 12th, 1775, affords striking evidence, if its facts be correct, of the embittered state of public feeling in America at this time;—"A gentleman, who travelled lately through Connecticut, informs us that he met with an old gentlewoman who told him that she had fitted out and sent five sons and eleven grandsons to Boston, when she heard of the engagement between the Provincials and Regulars. The gentleman asked her if she did not shed a tear at parting with them? 'No,' said she, 'I never parted with them with more pleasure.'—'But suppose,' said the gentleman, 'they had all been killed?'—'I had rather,' said the noble matron, 'this had been the case, than that ONE of them had come back a coward.'" *Moore's Diary of the American Revolution*, vol. i. p. 71.

affectionately called it, "of Brotherly Love." There, among its chosen delegates, sat the illustrious Franklin, burning with indignation against the Ministers of Great Britain, and eager to convert to the benefit of the New World the intimate knowledge which he had acquired of the affairs, the feelings, and intrigues of the Old. There too were assembled the no less illustrious Washington and Patrick Henry, Samuel and John Adams, and Richard Henry Lee. With great promptitude Congress passed resolutions for raising a continental army; for the issue of a paper currency; for stopping the supply of provisions to the British vessels employed in the fisheries off Newfoundland, and preventing necessaries being sent to the British Army and Navy. These measures were not only boldly voted, but were no less resolutely carried out. By the middle of April it was calculated that between Nova Scotia and Georgia no less than one hundred thousand men were in daily military training, exclusive of the twenty thousand militiamen employed in the blockade of Boston.*

Congress was still sitting, and Boston was still invested by the Provincialists, when large military reinforcements, under the command of Generals Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton, reached that city. The force under Gage now amounted to ten thousand men, a force which, backed as it was by a powerful squadron of ships that floated despotically in the harbour of Boston, seemed to render Gage at least equal, if not superior, in strength, to the Provincialists. While the latter, then, were still half-disciplined—while in the whole American camp there were not nine cartridges to a man,† and while their line was weakened by being extended over an area of no fewer than ten miles—now was, in the opinion of the most competent judges, the time for Gage to strike a blow with sure and terrible effect. But, whether from a

* Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. p. 278.

† Sparks's Life and Writings of Washington, vol. i. p. 146.

dread of incurring responsibility, or from want of vigour and judgment, the well-intentioned Governor contented himself with proclaiming martial law in the Province, with publishing puny promises of pardon to those who should lay down their arms, and sterile threats of condign punishment to those who might reject the proffered clemency. His army, in fact, was for the time more than useless. "I have heard of ships," said Burke, "but never of armies, securing a port." * The only persons excepted from pardon were the celebrated John Hancock and Samuel Adams, whose offences were declared to be "of too flagitious a nature" to admit of consideration.† "When," writes Walpole to Mason, "did you ever read before of a besieged army threatening military execution on the country of the besiegers?" ‡ So little did the Americans regard the exception, that the central Continental Congress elected Hancock to be their President; § at the same time making their memorable selection of George Washington to command their armies.

In addition to General Gage's remissness in attacking the American army, he was guilty of another omission, apparently even less defensible than the other. Opposite to Boston, divided from that city by the river Charles, stands the town or suburb of Charlestown, at the rear of which rises some high ground, the occupation of which was, for obvious reasons, of no less consequence to the insurgents than to the British. Gage, however, whatever excuse there may have been for him, had omitted to fortify this important post,‖ and in the mean time the Americans had laid a plan to get it

* Walpole's Letters, vol. vi. p. 160.

† American Archives, vol. ii. col. 969. Fourth Series.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. vi. p. 238. Ed. 1857.

§ John Hancock, LL.D., was born about the year 1737. As President of the Continental Congress in 1776, he signed the famous Declaration of Independence. He died Governor of Massachusetts 8 October 1793, at the age of fifty-six.

‖ "It is said that General Gage was repeatedly advised to occupy and fortify this commanding post." *Stedman's Hist. of the American War*, vol. i. p. 125, *note*.

into their possession, a plan which they proceeded to execute as follows. About 11 o'clock, on the night of the 16th of June, a detachment of about a thousand men, who had previously joined solemnly together in prayer, ascended silently and stealthily a part of the heights known as Bunker's Hill, situated within cannon-range of Boston, and commanding a view of every part of the town. This brigade was composed chiefly of husbandmen, who wore no uniform, and who were armed with fowling-pieces only, unequipped with bayonets. The person selected to command them on this daring service was one of the lords of the soil of Massachusetts, William Prescott of Pepperell, the Colonel of a Middlesex regiment of militia. "For myself," he said to his men, "I am resolved never to be taken alive." Preceded by two serjeants, bearing dark lanterns, and accompanied by his friends, Colonel Gridley and Judge Winthrop, the gallant Prescott, distinguished by his tall and commanding figure, though simply attired in his ordinary calico frock, calmly and resolutely led the way to the heights. Those who followed him were not unworthy of their leader. They were not the refuse of the galleys, such as had been the men who had won for Dupleix the sovereignty of the Carnatic, nor were they the sweepings of the stews and pothouses of Westminster and Southwark, such as had assisted Clive to win his magnificent victory at Plassey. The men who followed William Prescott to Bunker's Hill were a staid and thoughtful peasantry—ill-disciplined and ill-armed, it is true—but many of them, from their habits of life, and from frequent encounters with Indians, having the advantage of being excellent marksmen with the rifle. Moreover, if the British Infantry was prepared to fight to the last for the credit of its immemorial reputation for steadiness and valour, the men of Massachusetts were animated by the still more ardent feeling that upon their steadfastness and bravery depended, in all probability, the freedom or subjugation of their country. Several

of their officers were veterans of the old wars with the French in America. Prescott had assisted at the conquest of Nova Scotia. Israel Putnam had won for himself a brilliant reputation for chivalrous gallantry. Richard Gridley, to whom was allotted the duty of forming the intrenchments, had been the engineer employed at the reduction of Louisburg in 1745, and, lastly, both he and John Stark, another intrepid soldier of the old wars, had distinguished themselves fighting under the banner of Wolfe at Quebec.

It was half-past eleven o'clock before the engineers commenced drawing the lines of a redoubt. As the first sod was being upturned, the clocks of Boston struck twelve. More than once during the night—which happened to be a beautifully calm and starry one—Colonel Prescott descended to the shore, where the sound of the British sentries walking their rounds, and their exclamations of "All's well" as they relieved guard, continued to satisfy him that they entertained no suspicion of what was passing above their heads. Before daybreak the Americans had thrown up an intrenchment, which extended from the Mystic River to a redoubt on their left. The astonishment of Gage when, on the following morning, he found this important site in the hands of the enemy, may be readily conceived. Obviously, not a moment was to be lost in attempting to dislodge them, and accordingly a detachment under General Howe was at once ordered on this critical service. In the mean time, a heavy cannonade—first of all from the "Lively" sloop of war, and afterwards from a battery of heavy guns from Copp's Hill in Boston—was opened upon the Americans. Exposed, however, as they were, to a storm of shot and shell, and unaccustomed, as they also were, to face an enemy's fire, they nevertheless pursued their operations with the calm courage of veteran soldiers. Later in the day, indeed, when the scorchin sun rose high in the cloudless heavens—when the contin us labours of so many hours threatened

to prostrate them—and when they waited, but waited in vain, for provisions and refreshments—the hearts of a few began to fail them, and the word retreat was suffered to escape from their lips. There was among them, however, a master-spirit, whose cheering words and chivalrous example never failed to restore confidence. On the spot—where now a lofty column, overlooking the fair landscape and calm waters, commemorates the events of that momentous day—was then to be seen, conspicuous above the rest, the form of Prescott of Pepperell in his calico frock, as he paced the parapet to and fro, instilling resolution into his followers by the contempt which he manifested for danger, and, amidst the hottest of the British fire, delivering his orders with the same serenity as if he had been on parade. "Who is that person?" enquired Governor Gage of a Massachusetts gentleman, as they stood reconnoitering the American works from the opposite side of the river Charles. "My brother-in-law, Colonel Prescott;" was the reply. "Will he fight?" asked Gage. "Ay," said the other, "to the last drop of his blood."

Next after Prescott, the person most active in encouraging the Provincialists and in giving orders, was the gallant veteran, Israel Putnam. He was thus employed, when a solitary horseman rode up to him at full gallop. It was the youthful and meditative President of the Massachusetts Congress, Joseph Warren, who, notwithstanding he had passed the night in transacting business, and was suffering severely from headache, was no sooner informed that the British troops were preparing to march out of Boston, than he hurried off to the scene of the expected conflict. Putnam at once offered to resign his command to him, to which the other made reply that he had merely come to the ground as a volunteer; at the same time enquiring where his musket was likely to be of most service against the British. "Go to the redoubt," said Putnam; "you will there be covered."—"I

came not to be covered," replied Warren; "tell me where I shall be most in danger. Tell me where the action will be hottest."—"The redoubt," said Putnam, "will be the enemy's object. If that can be defended the day is ours." Warren, it is needless to say, hastened to the redoubt.*

It was past three o'clock in the afternoon, when General Howe's detachment, consisting of about two thousand men,† landed at Charlestown and formed for the attack. Prescott's instructions to his men, as the British approached, were sufficiently brief. "The redcoats," he said, "will never reach the redoubt if you will but withhold your fire till I give the order, and be careful not to shoot over their heads." In the meanwhile, ascending the hill under the protection of a heavy cannonade, the British Infantry had advanced unmolested to within a few yards of the enemy's works, when Prescott gave the word—"Fire." So promptly and effectually were his orders obeyed, that nearly the whole front rank of the British fell. Volley after volley was now opened upon them from behind the intrenchments, till at length even the bravest began to waver and fall back; some of them, in spite of the threats and passionate entreaties of their officers, even retreating to the boats. Minutes, many minutes apparently, elapsed before the British troops were rallied and returned to the attack. Exposed to the burning rays of the sun — encumbered with heavy knapsacks

* Everett's Life of Joseph Warren, and Peabody's Life of Israel Putnam, in *Sparks's American Biography*, vol. x. pp. 156, 157, and vol. vii. p. 173; first series.

† This number was subsequently increased by another reinforcement under General Clinton. The insurgent force, according to the most trustworthy of their writers, never exceeded four thousand. General Gage, on the other hand, in his despatch to the Secretary of State, states that the British had to contend against "above three times their own number." *London Gazette*, 25 July 1775. If this was the case, the American force must have amounted to six thousand. A British officer, who was engaged in the battle, writes home to his friends that they were opposed by between five thousand and seven thousand men. *Nicolas's Hist. Records of the Royal Marines*, p. 88. This, however, is no doubt an exaggeration. Probably, on neither side, were there at any time more than two thousand actually engaged; indeed Washington computed that, on the American side, there were never more than one thousand five hundred

containing provisions for three days—compelled to toil up very disadvantageous ground with the grass reaching to their knees—clambering over rails and hedges, and led against men who were fighting from behind intrenchments, and constantly receiving reinforcements by hundreds, few soldiers perhaps but British Infantry would have been prevailed upon to renew the conflict. Again, however, they advanced to the charge. Again, when within five or six rods of the redoubt, the same tremendous discharge of musketry was opened upon them, and again, in spite of many heroic examples of gallantry set them by their officers, they retreated in the same disorder as before. By this time, the Grenadiers and Light Infantry had lost three fourths of their men; some companies had only eight or nine men left; one or two had even less. When the Americans looked forth from their intrenchments, the ground was literally covered with the wounded and the dead. According to an American who was present—"The dead lay as thick as sheep in a fold." For a few seconds General Howe was left almost alone. Nearly every officer of his staff had been either killed or wounded. The Americans, who have done honourable justice to his gallantry, remarked that, conspicuous as he stood in his General Officer's uniform, it was a marvel that he escaped unhurt. He retired; but it was with the stern resolve of a hero to rally his men; to return and to vanquish.

In the mean time, the horrors of this celebrated day were far from being confined to the scene of carnage on Bunker's Hill. In consequence of a raking fire having been kept up on the British flanking parties from the houses at Charlestown, General Clinton had given orders for the immediate destruction of the place. These orders were effectually carried into execution by discharges of red-hot shot from the ships, and of carcasses from Copp's Hill battery, the result of which was, that owing to the houses and some of the principal edifices being constructed of wood, there burst

forth a conflagration which, combined with the roar of artillery, the crashing of falling buildings, and the bloody conflict raging on the heights, presented a scene of indescribable grandeur and awe. "Straight before us," writes General Burgoyne, who witnessed the scene from the batteries, "[lay] a large and noble town in one great blaze. The church-steeples, being timber, were great pyramids of fire above the rest; behind us the church-steeples, and heights of our own camp, covered with spectators of the rest of our army which was engaged; the hills round the country covered with spectators, the enemy all in anxious suspense. The roar of cannon, mortars, and musketry; the crash of churches, ships upon the stocks, and whole streets falling together, to fill the ear; the storm of the redoubts, with the objects above described, to fill the eye, and the reflection that perhaps a defeat was a final loss to the British empire in America, to fill the mind; made the whole a picture, and a complication of horror and importance, beyond anything that ever came to my lot to be witness to. It was a sight for a young soldier, that the longest service may not furnish again." *

The third and last attack, made by General Howe upon the enemy's intrenchments, appears to have taken place after a considerably longer interval than the previous one. This interval was employed by Prescott in addressing words of confidence and exhortation to his followers, to which their cheers returned an enthusiastic response. "If we drive them back once more," he said, "they cannot rally again." General Howe, in the mean time, by disencumbering his men of their knapsacks, and by bringing the British Artillery to play so as to rake the interior of the American breastworks, had greatly enhanced his chances of success. Once more then, at the word of command, in steady unbroken

* Letter to Lord Stanley, dated 25 June 1775: *American Archives*, vol. ii. col. 1095. Fourth Series.

line, the British Infantry mounted to the deadly struggle. Once more the cheerful voice of Prescott exhorted his men to reserve their fire till their enemies were close upon them. Once more the same deadly fire was poured down upon the advancing royalists. Again, on their part, there was a stagger—a pause—an indication of wavering, but on this occasion it was only momentary. Onward and headlong, against breastworks and against vastly superior numbers, dashed the British Infantry with an heroic devotedness never surpassed in the annals of chivalry. Almost in a moment of time, in spite of a second volley as destructive as the first, the ditch was leaped and the parapet mounted. In that final charge fell many of the bravest of the brave. Of the 52nd Regiment alone, three Captains, the moment they stood on the parapet, were shot down. Still, the British Infantry continued to pour forward, flinging themselves among the American Militiamen, who met them with a gallantry equal to their own. The powder of the latter having by this time become nearly exhausted, they endeavoured to force back their assailants with the butt-ends of their muskets. But the British bayonets carried all before them. Then it was, when further resistance was evidently fruitless, and not till then, that the heroic Prescott gave the order to retire. From the nature of the ground it was necessarily more a flight than a retreat. Many of the Americans, leaping over the walls of the parapet, attempted to fight their way through the British troops; while the majority endeavoured to escape by the narrow entrance to the redoubt. In consequence of the fugitives being thus huddled together, the slaughter became terrific. "Nothing," writes a young British officer who was engaged in the *mêlée*, "could be more shocking than the carnage that followed the storming of this work. We tumbled over the dead to get at the living, who were crowding out of the gorge of the redoubt in order to form

under the defences which they had prepared to cover their retreat." * Prescott was one of the last to quit the scene of slaughter. Although more than one British bayonet had pierced his clothes, he escaped without a wound.†

Less fortunate was the humane, the accomplished, and eloquent Joseph Warren. In the midst of the retreat, a ball struck him on the head. Mechanically he raised his hand to the part where he was hit, and then fell down dead. Only four days previously he had received his commission as a Major-General. So well was his worth known to the royalists, that they are said to have computed his loss as equal to that of five hundred ordinary men.‡

Another brave man, who fell at Bunker's Hill, was Major Pitcairn, who had commanded the British advanced force in the unhappy affair at Lexington. At the time when he fell, his son, Lieutenant Pitcairn, was standing at his side. Fixing a wistful look upon the youth, he expired without uttering a word. "My father is killed," said the son as he kneeled down by him; "I have lost my father." For more than a minute the soldiers slackened their fire. "We have all," cried many of them, "lost a father." §

That night, the British intrenched themselves on the Heights, lying down in front of the recent scene of conflict. The loss in killed and wounded was found to be no less than one thousand and fifty-four. "The loss sustained by

* Letter from Lieutenant and Adjutant J. Waller, of the Royal Marines, to his brother, dated "Charlestown Heights, June 22, 1775." *Nicolas's Hist. Records of the Royal Marines*, p. 87.

† William Prescott, the son of a Councillor and wealthy landed proprietor in Massachusetts, was born in that province in the year 1725, and consequently, at the time of the battle of Bunker's Hill, he must have entered upon his fiftieth year. The following year he accompanied Washington in his expedition against the British at New York, and subsequently served in the brief campaign which led to the surrender to the American general, Gates, of the British Army under the command of General Burgoyne. Colonel Prescott died October 13, 1795, at the age of seventy.

‡ Gordon's Hist. of the American Revolution, vol. ii. pp. 46, 49, 50. Moore's Diary of the American Revolution, vol. i. pp. 98, 110.

§ Moore's Diary of the American Revolution, vol. i. p. 99 and *note*.

the Rebels," writes General Gage, "must have been considerable, from the vast numbers they were seen to carry off during the action. About one hundred were buried the day after, and thirty found on the field, some of whom are since dead." * According to the account published by the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, the American loss was one hundred and forty-five killed and missing, and three hundred and four wounded.† Of their six pieces of artillery they only succeeded in carrying off one.

Such was the result of the famous "Battle of Bunker's Hill," a contest from which Great Britain derived little advantage beyond the credit of having achieved a brilliant passage at arms, but which, on the other hand, produced the significant effect of manifesting, not only to the Americans themselves, but to Europe, that the Colonists could fight with a steadiness and courage, which ere long might render them capable of coping with the disciplined troops of the mother-country. Already Washington had written to a friend in England in allusion to the skirmish at Concord—"This may serve to convince Lord Sandwich, and others of the same sentiment, that Americans will fight for their liberties and property, however pusillanimous, in his Lordship's eyes, they may appear in other respects." ‡ "Americans *will* fight"—wrote Franklin: "England has lost her Colonies for ever." Franklin's mind, as is evident, had become more and more incensed against the British Legislature. "Mr. Strahan"—runs his well-known epistle to his old friend, William Strahan, the printer—"You are a Member of Parliament, and one of the majority which has doomed my country to destruction. You have begun to burn our towns and murder our people. Look upon your hands. They are stained with the blood of

July 5.

* Letter to the Earl of Dunmore, June 26, 1775: *American Archives*, Fourth Series, vol. ii. col. 1107.

† *Ibid.* col. 1375.

‡ Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. i. p. 137.

your relations. You and I were long friends; you are now my enemy, and I am yours, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN."

It was apparently owing to the supineness with which General Gage had allowed himself to be blockaded within his lines, as well as to the recent untoward military events which had taken place under his command, that, in the month of October, the hearts of the people of Boston were gladdened by seeing him take his departure from their shores. Ministers, by ascribing his recall to a desire to consult with him in respect to the plan of the next campaign, allowed him to fall with respectability.* General Howe was appointed to the chief command of the British forces in his room.†

In the mean time, the bold spirit of resistance which animated the people of Massachusetts was rapidly diffusing itself over the other Colonies. In Virginia so threatening became the aspect of affairs, that the Governor of the Province, the Earl of Dunmore, was compelled to seek refuge on board a British man of war; nor was it long before Lord William Campbell and Governor Martin, the respective Governors of North and South Carolina, deemed it prudent to imitate his example. Another important event, at this time, was the accession of the Province of Georgia to the general Confederacy; thus enabling the people of America to designate themselves by a title which they had long coveted—that of the THIRTEEN UNITED COLONIES. "I fear," writes the English Secretary at War, Lord Barrington, "we shall not suppress the Rebellion, though we may, and probably shall, beat the rebels."‡ The sagacious Judge Livingston, on the other side of the

* General Thomas Gage, formerly Governor of Montreal and afterwards Governor of Massachusetts, died on the 2nd of April, 1788. He was the second son of Thomas, first Viscount Gage.

† General, afterwards Sir William Howe, on the death of his brother, the celebrated Admiral, in 1799, succeeded him as fifth Viscount Howe. He died in 1814.

‡ Political Life of Lord Barrington, p. 159.

Atlantic, had long been of the same opinion. "It is intolerable," were his words to his family, as far back as the year 1773, "that a Continent like America should be governed by a little island three thousand miles away. America must and will be independent." *

* Life of Edward Livingston, p. 20.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Reluctance of the Americans to break off from the "Old Country"—The "Olive Branch" Petition to the King—No Answer given to it—The Lake Forts taken by the Americans—Unconciliatory Royal Speech on opening Parliament—Warm Debates—Duke of Grafton retires from Office—Lord George Germaine appointed Secretary for American Affairs—Speech of Edmund Burke in favour of Conciliation—"Lord North's Prohibitory Bill" passed—Fox's Motion for Enquiry negatived by the Commons, and the Duke of Grafton's plan of Conciliation rejected by the Lords—Montreal occupied by the Americans—Siege of Quebec—The Americans evacuate Canada.

SLIGHT reason as there was for the Americans to retain their ancient affection for Great Britain, they nevertheless attributed their wrongs rather to the aristocratic form of her Government than to any unfriendly feelings on the part of the British nation, and, accordingly, the great mass of the American people were still reluctant to break off the ties which united them to the "old country" without making a further attempt to effect a reconciliation. Under these circumstances, it was proposed and carried in Congress in the month of June, that, on condition of Great Britain foregoing altogether her assertion of right to tax her Colonies, and also conceding them a free commerce, America, on her part, would not only continue to vote pecuniary aids to the mother-country, but would undertake to discharge the whole of her debts within the space of a century. Congress, at the same time, drew up a petition to the King, in which—styling him the "King's Most Excellent Majesty," and preferring their complaints in the most loyal and dutiful language—they humbly entreated him to exercise his benevolence and magnanimity in re-establishing peace and unity between the two countries. This document, on the success

of which the Americans rested their last fleeting hopes of being able to avert the horrors of civil war, was tenderly designated by them "THE OLIVE BRANCH." Its safe transmission to Great Britain was entrusted to Richard Penn, an honoured proprietary of Pennsylvania, who in due time sailed with it to England, attended by the sanguine hopes and ardent prayers of every lover of peace throughout the great Continent of America.

It was on the 1st of September, that Penn placed in the hands of the amiable and well-intentioned Earl of Dartmouth this memorable appeal, on which depended the integrity of a great empire, and the happiness or misery of many millions. Dartmouth, a timid and cautious statesman, received it, pending a consultation with his colleagues, in ominous silence. Constituted as the Cabinet was, its fate may be readily conceived. To the Norths, the Dartmouths, and the Sandwiches, nothing could be easier than to arrive at the conclusion that Congress, being a self-constituted body, and its constituents being in open rebellion, had put themselves beyond the pale of recognition. And such, unhappily, proved to be the result of their deliberations. It was coldly intimated to the American people that no notice could be taken of their Petition. Thus, then, did Great Britain fling away the last chance of conciliating the Colonies, and preventing the dismemberment of the Empire! And what, let us ask, were likely to be the feelings of the American people—of the husbandman hesitating to sharpen his bayonet—of the wife trembling for the safety of her husband—of the mother for her son—when, after weeks, if not months, of hope deferred, it became known over the length and breadth of the land that their "Olive Branch" lay a dead letter in a Secretary of State's Office, and that the words, "NO ANSWER WOULD BE GIVEN," constituted the only recognition which it would probably ever receive. Then it was that indignation effectually took the place of

ancient sympathies and affections! Then it was, that the brave vowed to stand by the brave, and the timid sought to animate the timid. From that moment, whenever the man of peace urged the unrighteousness of shedding human blood—whenever the philanthropist descanted on the awful consequences of plunging into civil war—whenever the wavering loyalist pleaded the sacred ties which attached him to his sovereign—the invariable reply which they received from their fellow-countrymen was a recurrence to the fate of the "Olive Branch," and to the aristocratic insolence of the British Legislature. "Bear in mind"—said the master-spirits of America—"the fate of the second petition of Congress to the King! All the blood and guilt of the war rest with British, and not with American counsels."*

During the time that Washington was employed in blockading General Howe in Boston, other military operations, of no mean interest, were being carried on in a distant province of the American Continent. The part which Canada might be induced to take, in the event of a civil war breaking out between Great Britain and her colonies, was naturally a question of deep interest to both parties. By the other colonies, the Canadians seem to have been regarded as much more disaffected towards the mother-country than subsequently proved to be the case; and accordingly, influenced by this consideration, some bold and ardent spirits of the Province of Connecticut organized a secret project for seizing two forts, renowned in former warfare, Ticonderoga, situated on Lake George, and Crown Point, on Lake Champlain. The expedition con-

* Ramsay's Hist. of the American Revolution, vol. i. p. 214. See also Wilkes's Speech in the House of Commons, October 31, 1776. "There was not a word," he said, "in the Petition but what breathed submission and loyalty. And yet the [illegible]ful answer of the Secretary of the American Department, after long deli[illegible]nis bene[illegible] the last degree irritating. It was—'*that no answer would be given*' [illegible] will not treat. We scorn to negotiate with you. We exact un[illegible]ce and unit[illegible] sion. This, Sir, in my opinion, might justly be called indign[illegible]on the succe[illegible] drove the Americans to despair." *Parl. Hist.*, vol. xviii. col. 1,

sisted of about three hundred and forty men, of whom the majority were known by the name of Green Mountain Boys from the locality in Vermont which had given them birth. Their leader was Ethan Allen, a native of Connecticut, well-known to his fellow-countrymen as an active and intrepid champion of popular rights. At Castleton, about twenty-five miles from Ticonderoga, they were overtaken by the celebrated Benedict Arnold, who preferring the profession of arms to his former occupations of druggist and general merchant, had recently received a Colonel's commission from the Congress of Massachusetts.* Their great difficulty lay in procuring boats, in which to cross the lake to the opposite shore on which Ticonderoga stood, as well as in finding a guide sufficiently well acquainted with the fort and its vicinity. "Allen," writes his biographer, "made inquiries as to these points of Mr. Beman, a farmer residing near the lake in Shoreham, who answered that he seldom crossed to Ticonderoga, and was little acquainted with the particulars of its situation, but that his son Nathan, a young lad, passed much of his time there in company with the boys of the garrison. Nathan was called, and appeared, by his answers, to be familiar with every nook in the fort, and every passage and by-path by which it could be approached. In the eye of Colonel Allen he was the very person to thread out the best avenue, and, accordingly, with the consent of the father, and by a little persuasion, Nathan Beman was engaged to be the guide of the party."† Arrived, at last, on the other side of the lake, it was in the grey dawn of a spring morning that Allen and Arnold, unobserved by May 10.
the British, found themselves, with an advanced detachment of eighty-three men, within cannon-shot of Ticonderoga, lay [illegible] an important military post, but in our day a picturesque the words. Every eye was fixed upon Ethan Allen as he pro-
the only rec
Then it was,

* Sparks's Life of Arnold, pp. 8, 14, 16.
† Sparks's Life of Ethan Allen, p. 274.

ceeded to address his followers. "Friends, and fellow-soldiers," he said, "we must this morning quit our pretensions to valour, or possess ourselves of this fortress; and, inasmuch as it is a desperate attempt, I do not urge it contrary to will. You that will undertake voluntarily, poise your firelocks." Every firelock was poised as he spoke; and accordingly, placing himself at the head of the centre file, he led the way, with Arnold walking by his side, silently and stealthily, towards the gate of the fortress.

The garrison of Ticonderoga consisted at this time of a Governor—one Captain De La Place—three sergeants, a gunner, and forty-four men, a force amply sufficient to have maintained it against the undisciplined band by which it was threatened. De La Place's imprudence, however, precluded the necessity of a siege. So little suspicion had he of danger, and consequently so little precaution had he taken to prevent surprise, that when Ethan Allen reached the fortress, he found to his great satisfaction that the wicket was left open. Scarcely had the sentinel had time to snap his musket at him, and betake himself to flight, before the Americans, raising the war-whoop of the Indians, had dashed into the fort and overpowered the guard. The first demand of their leader was to be conducted to De La Place's sleeping-room, the door of which proved to be fastened within. "Come forth instantly," exclaimed Allen, "or I will sacrifice the whole garrison." "By what authority?" inquired the bewildered officer, as he came forth undressed. "I demand it," said Ethan Allen, "in the name of the Great Jehovah and of the Continental Congress." De La Place endeavoured to remonstrate with him, but to no purpose. At length, overawed by the drawn sword and the determined expression of countenance of Ethan Allen, he reluctantly yielded to circumstances, and ordered his men to be paraded without arms.*

* Bancroft's Hist. of the United States, vol. vii. pp. 339, 340. There were probably

The fall of Fort Ticonderoga was followed by that of Crown Point, which, by some neglect, had been left without a garrison. About the same time, Arnold seized and armed a private schooner, of which, having been a seaman in his youth, he took command. Proceeding down Lake Champlain to St. John's, he not only took possession of the fort at that place, but with great skill and spirit surprised and captured the "Enterprise" sloop, the only vessel of war on the lake; thus transferring the command of that important sheet of water from the sway of the British to that of the Americans.

The blame of these disgraces is said to have been in a great degree attributable to General Carleton, the Governor of Canada,* who, by committing the double error of conceiving exaggerated notions of the loyalty of the Canadians, as well as of his own popularity amongst them, had allowed himself to be lulled into a false security. A corporal's guard, he told General Gage, was sufficient to defend the Province. Arnold and Ethan Allen had arrived at a different conclusion. It was the conviction of Arnold, as he wrote to the Continental Congress in June, that Canada might be reduced with as few as two thousand men. "The key is ours as yet," writes also Allen to the Congress of New York on the 2nd of June, "and provided the Colonies would suddenly push an army of two or three thousand men into Canada, they might make a conquest of all that would oppose them in the extensive Province of Quebec, unless reinforcements from England should pre-

some extenuating circumstances in De La Place's case; as instead of being brought before a Court-Martial he was allowed to sell his commission. *Adolphus's Hist. of England*, vol. ii. p. 231, *note*. 4th Edition.

* General afterwards Sir Guy Carleton, K.B. In 1781, he succeeded Sir Henry Clinton as Commander in Chief of the British forces in America, in which post he continued till the termination of the war, when, after a final interview with General Washington, he evacuated New York and returned to England. On the 21st of August 1786 he was created Baron Dorchester. His death took place on the 10th of November 1808, in the eighty-sixth year of his age.

vent it. Such a diversion would weaken General Gage or insure us Canada. I would lay my life on it that with fifteen hundred men I would take Montreal." As affairs at present stood, General Carleton had no other alternative but to concentrate the small force under his command, amounting only to eight hundred men, with whom he shut himself up in St. John's, about one hundred miles to the northward of Ticonderoga, where he awaited the arrival of reinforcements and the dawn of better times.

It was during the eventful season of the blockade of Boston by the Americans, and of their simultaneous invasion of Canada, that the British Parliament reassembled at West-
Oct. 26. minster. The speech, which the King delivered from the throne, was listened to with intense interest. If there were any persons who imagined that Ministers might possibly have learned wisdom during the recess, they were destined to be signally disappointed. The speech, in fact, was a tissue of arrogance and misrepresentation. The great people, who were struggling for their liberties, were insolently designated "an unhappy, a misled, and deluded multitude." It was falsely asserted that their professions of loyalty were intended only to mislead, and, no less falsely, that their real object in taking up arms was the establishment of an independent empire. Wisdom, no less than clemency, proceeded the Speech, required the adoption of decisive measures, and consequently His Majesty had thought proper to order a considerable increase both to his military and naval establishments.*

Such a document was little likely to be discussed in

* Parl. History, vol. xviii. col. 696. On the subject of the unfortunate manner in which the English Ministers were misinformed and deceived by the servants of the Crown in America, in regard to the feelings and spirit of the American people, see the extracts from the Correspondence between General Gage and Lord Dartmouth, in the Appendix to the third volume of Mr. Jared Sparks's edition of Washington's Writings, pp. 506—515.

Parliament, without giving rise to many severe animadversions. In the House of Commons, Lord John Cavendish, and other members, insisted that portions of the King's Speech were positively untrue, while Colonel Barré and Charles Fox passed from the Speech itself to reprobate the military conduct of the war. Neither Lord Chatham, said Fox, nor the King of Prussia, nor even Alexander the Great, had ever gained more in one campaign than had been lost by the present Ministers. They had lost, in fact, a Continent. Although, added Fox, it might be difficult to justify the conduct of the Americans in the whole of their proceedings, still resistance was less reprehensible than tame submission to the tyranny of a British Parliament.* General Conway followed in the same strain. Great Britain, he insisted, had no right to tax her colonies. The Declaratory Act ought to be immediately repealed. "In the Commons," writes Walpole, "Mr. Conway, in a hotter speech than ever was made, exposed all their outrages and blunders, and Charles Fox told Lord North, that not Alexander, nor Cæsar, had ever conquered so much as he had lost in one campaign." †

In the House of Lords, the speech from the throne was denounced in language no less bold and forcible. The assertion that Independence was the real, though concealed, aim of the Americans was declared by Lord Rockingham to be utterly without any foundation. "Nevertheless," he added prophetically, "what they themselves never intended, we shall certainly drive them to. They will undoubtedly prefer Independence to slavery." In the strongest terms, also, he denied that their professions of loyalty had been merely hollow and insidious. So far, he said, from their conduct having been marked by duplicity, their declarations and intentions had invariably been most

* Parl. Hist., vol. xviii. col. 769.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. vi. p. 278. Edition, 1857.

explicit. From the commencement of the unhappy quarrel, they had not only announced their determination never to submit to taxation, but had boldly proclaimed to the world the steps which they intended to take, if driven to extremity. Session after session, said his lordship, have Ministers been warned of the ruin in which they were involving their country, as well as themselves. But what had been their policy? Instead of seeking information from the trusty and the well-informed, they had listened to the false or partial representations of prejudiced and designing men, men who, enjoying lucrative employments in America, were often only too glad to be furnished with an opportunity of advancing their own interests, and of gratifying their feelings of revenge, at the expense of others. The measures, he concluded, which had been recommended in the speech from the throne, he considered as portentous of the most disastrous consequences to the empire, and he should oppose them to the utmost of his ability.*

Lord Shelburne, in no less indignant terms, condemned the conduct of Ministers. Last year he said, a certain law-lord had pledged himself that a little bloodshed would bring the Americans to their senses. Since then, blood had been actually shed, but for what purpose had it flowed except to separate America from Great Britain—to sever her perhaps for ever? Ministers, by the despotic policy which they had pursued, had "precipitated their country into the most perilous of wars—a war with our brothers, our friends, and our fellow-subjects." Whatever visionaries might write on the subject, the prosperity of this great empire depended upon her commerce with her colonies, and consequently the independence of the one must inevitably lead to the destruction of the other. Indigence, if not ruin, he said, stared their lordships in the face.

* Belsham's Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. ii. pp. 133, 134.

For himself, he was singularly fortunate in having been brought up in the profession of a soldier. He was accustomed to the moderation and to the hardships of a military life, and his fall therefore would be comparatively easy.*

But the most remarkable speech in the course of the debate was that of the Lord Privy Seal, the Duke of Grafton. He had written, some weeks previously, to Lord North, intimating his conviction that the present struggle with the colonies was fraught with ruin and disgrace, and urging him to adopt immediate measures for effecting a reconciliation. Strong, however, as was the language in which his Grace had then expressed himself, Ministers could scarcely have expected such a chatisement as they were about to receive from their refractory colleague. "The Lord Privy Seal," writes Walpole to Mann, "deserted and Oct 28.
fired on them." The policy, said the Duke, which, for the last twelvemonths, had been applied to America, was most unfortunate. For himself, he openly admitted that he had been in error. It was true, he said, that he had supported the Administration. It had been partly, however, from the hope that conciliation might follow, and partly from having been misled and misinformed as to the true state of America, that he had been induced to give his countenance to measures which he had never really approved, and in which he could no longer think of concurring. He was now convinced that nothing short of a repeal of all the Acts of Parliament relating to America, which had been passed since 1763, would restore peace and good-will between the two countries. Only by so sweeping a repeal could their Lordships avert those fearful consequences which he anticipated with the utmost grief and horror. So strong, he concluded, was this conviction, that not only was he prepared to give his most

* Parl. Hist., vol. xviii. cols. 722—726.

determined opposition to the fatal measures advocated by the Ministry, but, broken down though he was in health, he should feel it his duty to continue to press his views upon their Lordships, even though he should be compelled to attend their House in a litter.*

In both Houses of Parliament, the appeals to the fears and common sense of Ministers were, as usual, made in vain. In the House of Lords the Address was carried by a large majority; nineteen peers, however, leaving on record a solemn protest against such parts of it as related to the policy of Ministers towards America. "We cannot consent to an Address," concludes this remarkable document," which may deceive his Majesty and the public into a belief of the confidence of this House in the present Ministers, who have deceived Parliament, disgraced the nation, lost the Colonies, and involved us in a civil war against our dearest interests and upon the most unjustifiable grounds; wantonly spilling the blood of thousands of our fellow-subjects."†

A few days after having delivered his recantation in the House of Lords, the Duke of Grafton retired from the post of Lord Privy Seal. At his parting interview with the King in the royal closet, he ventured to endeavour to impress upon his Sovereign the same convictions which he had declared in Parliament. "I added," writes the Duke in his Memoirs, "that, deluded themselves, his Ministers were deluding his Majesty. The King vouchsafed to debate the business much at large. He informed me that a large body of German troops was to join our forces, and appeared astonished when I answered earnestly, that his Majesty would find, too late, that twice that number

* Parl. Hist., vol. xviii. cols. 710, 711.

† The signatures attached to the protest are—Manchester, Devonshire, Chedworth, Boyle, Craven, Scarborough, Effingham, Rockingham, Richmond, Torrington, Fitzwilliam, Archer, Thanet, Cholmondeley, King, Portland, Stamford, Ponsonby, and Abingdon. *Parl. Hist.*, vol. xviii. col. 729.

would only increase the disgrace, and never effect his purpose." *

Unhappily, the middle as well as the upper classes of society took, at this time, the same harsh view of the conduct of the American people as had been adopted by the King and his Ministers. Accordingly loyal addresses, entirely unsolicited by Ministers, poured in, to their agreeable surprise, from all parts of the kingdom. "Lord North," writes Gibbon, "was as much surprised at the first that came up, as we could be at Sheffield." †

The Duke of Grafton was succeeded as Lord Privy Seal by the Earl of Dartmouth, whose removal from the American Secretaryship made room for Lord George Germaine. Lord Rochford resigning soon afterwards, Lord Weymouth was appointed Secretary of State for the Southern Department in his place. Nov. 4.

As Secretary for the Colonies, Lord George Germaine will be found playing so conspicuous a part during the remainder of the fatal contest with America, that a brief notice of this once celebrated person may not be unacceptable. Lord George, third son of Lionel first Duke of Dorset, subsequently became the father of Charles, the fifth and last duke.‡ In his youth he had eminently distinguished himself in the military profession. His gallantry at the battle of Dettingen had induced George the Second, whose godson he was, to appoint him one of his aides-de-camp, and at Fontenoy he was wounded while charging at the head of his regiment. The laurels, however, which he had won on these and on other occasions, were destined to be torn from

* Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. vi. p. 107.

† See the London Gazettes from 12 September 1775 to 9 March 1776, inclusive; and letter from Gibbon to Mr. Holroyd dated October 14, 1775: *Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works*, p. 271. Edition, 1837.

‡ During the greater portion of his life he was known as Lord George Sackville. In 1770, however, he assumed the surname of Germaine by Act of Parliament, pursuant to the wills of Sir John and Lady Elizabeth Germaine, of Drayton, in the County of Northampton.

him by his conduct on the field of Minden, on the 1st of August 1759. Three times, during the battle, the Commander-in-Chief, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, had sent orders to him to lead the British cavalry to the charge, and each time those orders were, for some unaccountable reason, disobeyed. Thus the entire destruction of the French army was left unaccomplished, and the victory rendered incomplete. Whether Lord George's conduct on that occasion was attributable to pusillanimity, or whether, as has been supposed, to jealousy of the reputation of Prince Ferdinand with whom he had recently been on ill terms, will probably ever continue a matter of doubt. To himself, the consequences were fatal. The Prince not only made no mention of him in the general orders after the battle, but expressed his surprise to some officers near him, when, in the evening, Lord George presented himself at his table. "Lord George's fall," writes Walpole to Mann, "is prodigious; nobody stood higher; nobody has more ambition or more sense." The disgrace, which he had entailed on the British army, naturally drew down on him the indignation of his fellow-countrymen. George the Second dismissed him from the command of his regiment and degraded him from his rank of General, on which Lord George demanded a Court-Martial, which was not refused him. Accordingly, on the 28th of February, 1760, the Secretary of War, Lord Barrington, acquainted the House of Commons that one of their Members was under arrest. On the following day the trial commenced at the Horse Guards. One might have imagined that it would have required far more resolution to appear and defend himself before so formidable a court of honour, than to have charged into the enemy's ranks at the battle of Minden. But Lord George manifested neither irresolution nor dismay. On the contrary, the undaunted front which he opposed to his accusers—the great abilities which he displayed during the trial—as well as

his distinguished bearing and tall commanding figure—invested him with an air of dignity which excited the admiration even of his enemies. "From the outset, and during the whole process," writes Walpole, "he assumed a dictatorial style to the Court, and treated the inferiority of their capacities as he would have done if sitting amongst them. He browbeat the witnesses, gave the lie to Sloper,* and used the Judge-Advocate, though a very clever man, with contempt. Nothing was timid. Nothing humble in his behaviour. His replies were quick and spirited. He prescribed to the Court, and they acquiesced."† Nevertheless, the Court confirmed the judgment of the King and of the public; finding him guilty of having disobeyed the orders of Prince Ferdinand, and pronouncing him unfit to serve his Majesty, in future, in any military capacity whatever. At the same time, the King ordered his name to be struck off the list of Privy Councillors. Fortunately for him, George the Third took a more lenient view of his offence than George the Second had done. Accordingly, in December 1765, he was appointed one of the Vice-Treasurers for Ireland, and on the 10th of November 1775, to the indignation of many persons, was nominated Secretary of State for the American Colonies.

Such was the previous history of this unpopular statesman, to whose judgment and talents were entrusted the future conduct of a ruinous war. In times less pregnant with difficulties and danger, Lord George Germaine would doubtless have figured not only as an efficient, but as a distinguished statesman. Though gifted with no great grasp of mind nor originality of genius, his abilities were unquestionably of no mean order. His judgment was usually excellent; he was singularly quick in comprehending the merits of any particular question, and was

* Lieutenant-Colonel Sloper, one of the witnesses.

† Walpole's Memoirs of the Reign of George 2, vol. iii. p. 272.

rapid, as well as correct, in conducting the business of the Secretary's Department. His political courage was never called in question. Moreover, he was in the highest degree straightforward. There was not a grain of duplicity in his disposition. It was said of him by "Single-speech" Hamilton that there was "no trash in his mind," and Richard Cumberland, who served under him at the Board of Trade, has done justice to his "decision and despatch of business." In the House of Commons he was always listened to with attention and respect. Though far from being an eloquent, or a brilliant speaker, he was an excellent debater. His language was the most simple. He never spoke except to the purpose. In conciseness, and in the perspicacity with which he explained himself, he has rarely been surpassed.

Cold in his manners, unconciliating in his intercourse with others, of a grave and thoughtful tone of mind, and keeping aloof from a world which seems to have taken a constant pleasure in reminding him of, and even exulting over, his disgrace, it was not unnatural that Lord George Germaine should have been regarded by his contemporaries as a man wrapped up in pride and misanthropy, without sympathies, and almost without a heart. Nevertheless his temper was placid, his disposition benevolent. In the society of the few persons whom he loved, no one could be more cheerful, nor even more fascinating. It is impossible, indeed, to peruse the evidence of his private virtues—of his unostentatious piety—his constant and well-timed charities—his desire to see his dependents smiling and happy—the cheerful resignation with which he endured the tortures of a fatal and excruciating disorder, and the Christian fortitude with which he met his end—without a desire to do some justice to one who was assuredly too harshly judged in his life-time, and who, after all, may have been wrongfully accused. "I was present," writes Cumberland, "whilst the Holy Sacrament was administered to him, two days before his death. He caused

his windows and bed-curtains to be thrown open, and exerted himself to the utmost on that awful occasion. He received the elements with a devotion and fervour, expressive of such inward peace and even gladness of heart, as are the strongest of all human evidences of an easy conscience and a well-prepared mind." The last words which he addressed to Cumberland evince that, whatever may have been his political errors, his intentions at least had been righteous. "You see me now," he said, "in those moments when no disguise will serve, and when the spirit of a man must be proved. I have a mind perfectly resigned, and at peace within itself. I have no more to do with this world, and what I have done in it, I have done for the best. I hope and trust I am prepared for the next. Tell me not of all that passes in health and pride of heart. These are the moments in which a man must be searched, and remember, that I die, as you see me, happy and content." *

Notwithstanding the failure of former attempts to arouse the legislature to a sense of its danger, Burke, on the 16th of November, moved for permission to bring into Parliament another, and very important Bill, for the purpose of "composing the present troubles, and quieting the minds of his Majesty's subjects in America." The principal objects which he advocated were "the renunciation, on the part of Great Britain, of the exercise of taxation, without interfering with the question of right;" the repeal of the obnoxious duty on tea, imposed in 1767; and a general pardon for past political offences. The Bill, indeed, proposed to retain the power of levying duties for the regulation of commerce, but, on the other hand, it placed at the disposal of the several General Assemblies whatever moneys might be so collected. Lastly,

* For accounts of the private virtues and social qualities of Lord George Germaine, see *Cumberland's Memoirs of Himself*, vol. i. p. 398, &c., and vol. ii. p. 237, &c.; also *Wraxall's Historical Memoirs of his own Time*, vol. ii. p. 157, &c. Lord George, who was raised to the peerage, by the title of Viscount Sackville, on the 11th of February 1782, died on the 26th of April 1785, in the seventieth year of his age.

it recommended the holding of a Congress, by royal authority, for the purpose of adjusting existing differences, and restoring good-will between the two countries. In vain, however, the illustrious philanthropist pressed his wise and simple measure on the attention of his hearers. It was lost by a fatal majority of two hundred and ten to one hundred and five.

In the mean time, Ministers were engaged in preparing another fatal measure, afterwards memorable as "Lord North's Prohibitory Bill," which, on the 20th of November, the Premier submitted to the House of Commons.* By the provisions of this Bill, all trade and commerce with the Thirteen United Colonies were interdicted. It authorised the seizure, whether in harbour or on the high seas, of all vessels laden with American property, and, lastly, it contained a provision, subsequently denounced in the House of Lords as a "refinement in tyranny," which rendered all persons, taken on board American vessels, liable to be entered as sailors on board British ships of war, and to serve, if required, against their own countrymen. Notwithstanding a violent opposition which this arbitrary measure met with from a few noble spirits in the House of Commons, it was carried in that Assembly by a majority of one hundred and twelve to sixteen.† Well might Lord Mansfield exclaim in the House of Lords that Great Britain "had passed the Rubicon!" Great Britain, argued the impassive lawyer, was justified in subjugating her Colonies by any means within her reach. "My Lords," he said, "quoting the words addressed by a Swedish General to his men—'You see the enemy before you. If you do not kill them, they will kill you.'" Well might the Lord Shelburne exclaim—"*Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat!*" Well

* Parl. Debates, vol. xviii. col. 992, &c. † *Ibid.*, vol. xviii. col. 1055.

might it be said by one of the ablest advocates of American rights, that Great Britain, already detested in the East, would now be execrated on both sides of the globe.* She had recklessly, almost wickedly, thrown away the scabbard. She had manifested to a brave and free people that no terms, short of an absolute and unconditional surrender of their rights, would satisfy her haughty demands. No alternative therefore was left to the Americans but either to agree to wear the fetters which they imagined that the parent-country was forging for them, or else to declare themselves, in the face of the world, a Free and Independent people, and to do battle for their liberties to the death.

Such, in fact, was the consummation which was fast approaching. In vain, during the remainder of the Season, was effort after effort made in both Houses of Parliament to arouse the Legislature to a sense of its infatuation, and the people of England to a knowledge of their danger. In vain the illustrious Camden denounced the impending war as a "wanton, cruel, and diabolical" one. In vain, over and over again it was asked whether it was in the nature of things that so vast a continent as America—a continent distinguished by the magnificence of its rivers and the productiveness of its soil, and sustaining a brave and rapidly increasing population—should long continue subject to the British power. It was in vain that Charles Fox, in the House of Commons, moved for an Enquiry into the causes of the ill-success of the British arms in North

1776.

Feb. 20.

* "Observations on the Justice and Policy of War with America." By Dr. Richard Price. This treatise obtained for its author the thanks of the citizens of London, as well as the freedom of the city, which was presented to him in a gold box. Shortly after the publication of this treatise, the Duke of Cumberland, happening to meet Dr. Price in the lobby of the House of Lords, was induced to pay him a high compliment on its merits. "I sat up so late last night reading it," said the Duke, "that I was almost blinded."—"I am sorry," said Dunning, who was standing by, "that your royal highness should have been so affected by a work, which has opened the eyes of almost every one else." *Adolphus's Hist. of England*, vol. ii. p. 317, *note*; 4th Edition.

America. In vain he endeavoured by his brilliant eloquence to arouse his audience to a sense of danger, if not of shame. It was in vain that he exposed to ridicule and scorn the incompetency of the British generals in America; that he denounced the unskilfulness of their late operations, and prophesied the failure of future ones. There had been perpetrated, he said, either gross ignorance and incapacity, or else gross negligence. Either the blame lay with the military and naval commanders, or else with the Ministers who had employed them. In either case, the country had a right to be informed who were the real culprits, in order that the evil might be remedied. Public justice demanded the enquiry, and none but the guilty would shrink from investigation. If, he added, our Generals and Admirals are blameless, is it fair that, to hide or palliate the blunders, the follies, the shameful and wretched inability of others, the innocent should be saddled with the disgrace which attaches to failure? Fox's motion was negatived by a majority of one hundred and thirty-six.* Not less unsuccessful was a final and affecting attempt made by the Duke
Mar. 14. of Grafton to prevent the further effusion of blood; this being the last important debate of the session.† On the 15th of April, the House of Lords sat in judgment on the notorious Duchess of Kingston, and on the 23rd of May the session was declared to be at an end.

We must now revert to the state of affairs on the other side of the Atlantic. In Boston, closely blockaded by the Americans under General Washington, the British regiments had been compelled to endure all the tedium and discomforts of a long winter and of an ignominious constraint. In Canada more stirring events had taken place. When we
1775. last took leave of that country, the forts of Ticonderoga and

* 240 to 104; Parl. Hist., vol. xviii. col. 1143 to 1156.

† Parl. Hist., vol. xviii. col. 1247, &c. The Duke's plan of conciliation was rejected by 91 against 31 votes.

Crown Point had been captured by Arnold and Ethan Allen. General Carleton had shut himself up in Fort St. John.

The American Congress had originally repudiated the irruption of the "Green Mountain Boys" into Canada, but, as it was unlikely that there should again occur so favourable an opportunity of carrying war into the heart of that Province, they chose to adopt the convenient pretext that General Carleton was projecting the invasion of the American territories, and despatched three thousand men to the aid of Arnold and Ethan Allen. The expedition was placed under the command of Generals Schuyler and Montgomery; their orders being "to take possession of St. John's, Montreal, and to pursue any other measures in Canada, which might have a tendency to promote the peace and security of the American Colonies." In execution of these instructions, the American generals advanced to Lake Champlain, where they took possession of Isle aux Noix, but were repulsed in an attack on St. John's. At this Sept. 6. time, ill-health compelling General Schuyler to return to Albany, the sole command of the expedition devolved on Montgomery. Without delay, that bold and able general laid siege to Forts Chamblée and St. John, situated about five miles from each other. The former, containing a large amount of ammunition, of which the Americans stood greatly in want, was reduced in fifteen days. The latter place, Nov. 3. being ill-supplied with provisions and ammunition, capitulated shortly afterwards. Montgomery then advanced in triumph to Montreal.

Of that gallant and accomplished soldier, Richard Montgomery, a passing notice may not be unacceptable. Born in the North of Ireland in 1737, he had formerly held a commission in the royal army, and, in addition to other distinguished military service, had fought under Wolfe at the battle and capture of Quebec. Since then, he had adopted America as the country of his affections, and consequently, when she

took up arms against the mother-country, he "sadly and reluctantly" accepted one of the eight Brigadier-Generalships which Congress added to the complement of the American Army. Having, like Washington, set his heart on devoting the remainder of his days to the pursuit of agriculture and the due discharge of his social duties, the gallant soldier had retired with a fair and newly-married wife, a sister of the celebrated Robert and Edward Livingston, to Rheinbach, an estate which he had purchased in the Province of New York, eighty miles away from the empire-city. Often did Edward Livingston, then a child of nine years old, recall in later days the last evening which Richard Montgomery passed with those whom he loved, in the little parlour at Rheinbach. "It was just," he writes, "before General Montgomery left for Canada. We were only three in the room; he, my sister and myself. He was sitting in a musing attitude between his wife, who, sad and silent, seemed to be reading the future, and myself, whose childish admiration was divided between the glittering uniform, and the martial bearing of him who wore it, when, all of a sudden, the silence was broken by Montgomery's deep voice repeating the following line—

'——'Tis a mad world, my masters.'

'I once thought so; now I know it.' The tone, the words, the circumstances, all overawed me, and I noiselessly retired." Edward Livingston never heard his voice again. His wife accompanied her "soldier," as she ever afterwards called her husband, as far as Saratoga, where they bade each other a last adieu. "You shall never," were his parting words, "have cause to blush for your Mont-
1775 gomery." *

In the mean time, Ethan Allen, with a force of one

† 1 rejected

* Life of Edward Livingston, pp. 31, 32, New York, 1864.

hundred and fifty men, had advanced to Montreal, in the hope of being able to take that city by surprise. The expedition, however, encountered signal ill-success. Ethan Allen was met, and defeated, by a detachment of the twenty-sixth regiment, and, having been taken prisoner, was sent on board a vessel of war, in which he was carried, handcuffed and fettered, to England.* "Several Canadians," writes a contemporary American, "were taken prisoners with Colonel Allen, whom the Regular Officers said they would put to death; on which Allen stepped up, opened his breast, and said the Canadians were not to blame; that he brought them there; and if any body must be murdered, let it be him. This got him great credit with all the officers at Montreal, and Carleton himself said it was a pity a man of Allen's spirit should be engaged in so bad a cause, as he calls it. Colonel Allen is prisoner on board the Gaspee brig before Montreal." † Montgomery, however, nothing daunted by the ill-success of his friend, pushed forward to Montreal, which important place proved to be utterly defenceless against the attack of any considerable military force. Accordingly General Carleton was compelled to evacuate it, when the inhabitants surrendered at discretion.

But the great object which the Americans had in view in invading Canada was the capture of Quebec and its almost impregnable fortress. In furtherance of this daring and hazardous project, General Washington had decided on strengthening the force under Montgomery by an additional body of fifteen hundred men, the command of

* Colonel, afterwards Brigadier-General, Ethan Allen, was born in Roxbury, Litchfield County, Connecticut. On his arrival in England, about the middle of December, he was confined in Pendennis castle near Falmouth, where he remained only till the 8th of January 1776, when he was put on board another vessel of war and conveyed to Halifax. Here he was kept in gaol till October, when he was removed to New York, where he was detained, sometimes in prison and sometimes on parole, till the 6th of May 1778, when he was exchanged and set at liberty. He died February 13, 1789.

† Moore's Diary of the American Revolution, vol. i. p. 158.

whom he entrusted to Arnold, the original designer of the expedition. Accordingly, after one of the most painful and perilous marches on record—after having been compelled by want of food to devour their dogs, and having had their ranks reduced by privation and fatigue to two-thirds of their original number—the expedition at length arrived in sight of Quebec. As the route, by which they had made their way, had been hitherto considered impassable by the inhabitants of the Canadian capital, the latter beheld the approach of the invaders with no less astonishment than alarm. Quebec was at this time in a very defenceless state. General Carleton was absent. A few troops only had been left by him in the city. On the other hand, as an offset to these propitious circumstances, the St. Lawrence flowed between Arnold and Quebec, and, as yet, he was without the means of transporting his force across the stream. This delay was promptly taken advantage of by a brave and energetic British officer, Colonel Maclean, who at once
Nov. 13. threw himself with a few troops into the city. This timely measure proved fatal to the designs of the Americans. When subsequently Arnold made a bold assault on one of
Nov. 14. the gates of the city, he was repulsed with considerable loss.

Thus Arnold, instead of entering Quebec as a victor, found himself in a very perilous position. Expecting every moment to be attacked by Colonel Maclean—who had strengthened his small force by arming the British sailors in the port—the American General retreated to Point aux Trembles, on the St. Lawrence, where he took up a favourable position between Quebec and Montreal. In the mean time, General Carleton, having been apprised of what had been passing in his absence, had immediately set out on his return to the Canadian capital; a purpose, however, which, in consequence of the St. Lawrence being covered with the craft of the enemy, he was only

able to accomplish by disguising himself as a fisherman, and crossing the stream in a fishing-boat, rowed by muffled oars. The British general immediately applied himself to put the city in as good a state of defence as possible. Every able-bodied royalist in Quebec was supplied with a musket. The disaffected were ordered to quit the city.

Such was the state of affairs when General Montgomery joined his forces with those of Arnold at Point aux Trem- Dec. 1.
bles, and proceeded with him to lay siege to Quebec. Greatly, however, to their disappointment, they discovered that their artillery was of too light a calibre to make a sufficient impression upon the place, and that a successful bombardment was therefore out of the question. Retreat, if not disgrace, stared them in the face. An inclement Canadian winter was rapidly setting in. The American troops were ill-provided with warm clothing. Their former enthusiasm had given place to disaffection and discontent; and, lastly, the day was near at hand which was to terminate their present military engagements. There still, however, remained the chance of being able to capture the city by escalade, and of this chance, almost desperate as it was, the American generals resolved to avail themselves. Accordingly, on the last day of the year, in the midst of a heavy snow-storm, Montgomery, at the head of nine hundred men, and Arnold, having seven hundred men under his command, issued from their quarters, for the purpose of making separate attacks upon different parts of the city. Admirable was the steadiness and resolution with which both detachments performed the service entrusted to them. At each point of attack, however, they encountered equal firmness and valour on the part of the British. Arnold's leg was shattered early in the action, yet his men, undismayed by being deprived of their gallant leader, continued to fight not the less valiantly till, sur-

rounded by a superior force, they were compelled to surrender themselves prisoners of war. The assault made by Montgomery's detachment was equally unsuccessful. The British, reserving their fire till the insurgents had advanced to within a few yards of them, opened upon them a discharge of grape-shot which did fatal execution. For a moment Montgomery paused for the purpose of animating his troops. "Men of New York," he exclaimed, "you will not fear to follow where your General leads." * Then, resuming his place in their front, he pressed forward amidst the murderous fire, till he had advanced within a few paces of the mouths of the British cannon, when he received three wounds, which instantly deprived him of life. In vain his followers sought to avenge his death. Their assaults were encountered with unflinching steadiness. The Americans were forced to retreat.

Among the persons, who now poured forth from the rescued city in pursuit of the flying foe, was that eminent lawyer and profound reasoner, Sir William Grant, at this time Attorney-General of Canada, and wearing the uniform of a volunteer in defence of the Province. One of the first corpses which impeded their path was that of Montgomery, who lay with his hand extended towards the city as if he had received his death-wound while in the act of urging on his men towards the goal which it was destined that he should never reach. "That," said Grant, "is Montgomery: I knew him when we studied together at St. Andrew's College." †

Dec. 31. Thus fell the brave Montgomery, a graceful gentleman, distinguished in private life by many amiable qualities, and, as a soldier, qualified by nature to rise to the highest distinction. Not only did America mourn for him as for one of the bravest and best of her adopted sons, but, in England,

* Armstrong's Life of R. Montgomery, in Sparks's American Biography, vol. i. p. 213.

† Dean Pellew's Life of Lord Sidmouth, vol. i. p. 316, *note*.

there were persons generous enough to express veneration for the memory of so intrepid and uncompromising a patriot. General Carleton, to his infinite credit, overlooked the delinquency of the rebel in the merits of the hero, and awarded him an honourable interment.* "The loss of the brave Montgomery," are Washington's words to General Schuyler, "will ever be remembered." † And again, he writes to Colonel Arnold—"In the midst of distress, I am happy to find that suitable honours were paid to the remains of Mr. Montgomery." ‡

General Arnold, after his repulse, withdrew his forces 1776.
to the famous heights of Abraham, where, notwithstanding the desertion of some of his followers, and the increasing disaffection of others, this able soldier contrived to keep Quebec in a state of siege till the approach of spring, at which season he expected to receive reinforcements of men and stores, of which he greatly stood in need. At the same time, General Carleton was no less anxiously waiting supplies from England, when, to his great joy, and to that of the garrison of Quebec, he learned that the "Isis," with two other British ships of war carrying the expected reinforcements on board them, were forcing their way through the masses of ice which impeded the navigation of the St. Lawrence. This accession of strength, so acceptable to one party, proved no less fatal to the prospects of the other. From other causes, the situation of the besieging force had become more and more embarrassing and its position more and more precarious. "Many of the troops are dejected," writes Arnold to General Wooster, "and anxious to get home; and some

* London Gazette for 5 March 1776. Forty-two years afterwards the remains of General Montgomery were removed from the spot where he fell and reinterred in the Episcopal church of St. Paul's, New York, in front of which stands a monument of white marble erected by order of Congress in honour of his memory.

† Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. iii. p. 250. ‡ *Ibid.* p. 264.

of them have actually set off, but I shall endeavour to continue the blockade while there are any hopes of success." * Before long, Arnold, in consequence of the state of his wounded leg, obtained leave of absence to proceed to Montreal. In his absence, his generals passed their time in quarrelling among themselves. Provisions and stores of every kind were becoming more and more difficult to be obtained, and, lastly, the small-pox began to make fearful havoc in their ranks. Under these circumstances there remained no alternative but retreat, which they had scarcely commenced, before General Carleton, issuing from the gates of Quebec, followed them so vigorously as to compel them to abandon their artillery and baggage, and to betake themselves to a precipitate and disorganised flight. One division of their army was captured at the Cedars by a mixed force of British and Indians. Another was overtaken and routed by General Carleton at Trois Rivières, between Quebec and Montreal. The remainder succeeded in reaching Lake Champlain, where they embarked, together with the garrisons of the other American military posts in Canada, for New York. The embarkation was personally superintended by Arnold, who remained behind till every boat, except his own, had left the shore. "He then," writes his biographer, "mounted his horse, attended by Wilkinson, his aide-de-camp, and rode back two miles, when they discovered the enemy's advanced Division in full march under General Burgoyne. They gazed on it, or in military phrase reconnoitered it, for a short time, and then hastened back to St. John's. A boat being in readiness to receive them, the horses were stripped and shot. The men were ordered on board, and Arnold, refusing all assistance, pushed off the boat with his own hands; 'thus,' says Wilkinson, 'indulging the

* Sparks's Life of Benedict Arnold, p. 52.

vanity of being the last man who embarked from the shores of the enemy.' The sun was now down, and darkness followed, but the boat overtook the army in the night at Isle aux Noix." * Thus was Canada once more brought under complete subjection to Great Britain.

* Sparks's Life of Arnold, pp. 62—3.

CHAPTER XXX.

Deplorable Condition of the American Army—Energy and ability of Washington as a Commander—Dorchester Heights taken by the Americans—The British evacuate Boston, which is entered by Washington in triumph—Arrival of German troops hired by the British—American "Declaration of Independence" published on the Fourth of July, 1776—Conciliatory Overtures of the British Commissioners rejected by the Americans—Battle of Brooklyn—Fruitless Conference on Staten Island—New York taken by General Howe—Perverse Policy of the British Government—Speech of Lord Chatham—His motion for Conciliation rejected by the House of Lords.

June 15. At the time when Washington was chosen General-in-Chief of the American forces, and assumed the direction
July 2. of the blockade of Boston, his fellow-citizens had expected from him the performance of scarcely less than impossibilities. Little aware, however, was the vast majority of them of the difficulties against which this illustrious man was called upon to contend. His situation was truly a most unenviable one. To use his own words, he found the army under his command a mere "mixed multitude of people under very little order or government." He was greatly in want of engineers. Enlistment went on but slowly. As winter approached, his men naturally became impatient to return to their chimney-corners and their families. There was a lamentable want in his camp of money, fire-arms, and engineers' stores. To the President of Congress Washington writes on the 21st of September—"My situation is inexpressibly distressing, to see the winter fast approaching upon a naked army; the time of their service within a few weeks of expiring, and no provision yet made for such important events. Add to these, the military chest is totally ex-

hausted. The Paymaster has not a single dollar in hand." * Such was the scarcity of another most important store, gunpowder, that the destruction of game by fowling-pieces was strictly prohibited. "We are obliged," writes Washington to his brother on the 13th of October, "to submit to an almost daily cannonade without returning a shot, from our scarcity of powder, which we are necessitated to keep for closer work than cannon-distance, whenever the red-coat gentry please to step out of their intrenchments." † But dispiriting as this state of affairs must have been to Washington, far gloomier would have been his feelings had the startling fact been known to him that, in addition to the disciplined forces of Great Britain, the vast military power of Russia was likely, before the lapse of many months, to be arrayed against his country. In a letter from Lord Dartmouth to General Howe, dated September 5th, 1775, and marked "*Secret*," his lordship writes —"I should be unpardonable if I did not acquaint you that his Majesty's Minister at Petersburgh, having been instructed to sound the Empress how far she would be disposed, in case of necessity, to assist his Majesty with such force as the state and security of the Empire would admit, her Imperial Majesty has, in the fullness of her affection for the British Nation, and of gratitude for the benefit she received under her late difficulties, made the most explicit declaration, and given the most ample assurance of letting us have any number of Infantry that may be wanted. In consequence of this generous and magnanimous offer, a requisition has been made for twenty thousand men; and it is proposed to send the greatest part of these auxiliaries, as early as possible in the Spring, to Quebec, and I trust we shall have at least an equal number of British Troops in North America to act with them if occasion requires." ‡

* Washington's Writings, by Sparks, vol. iii. p. 104. † *Ibid.* p. 128.
‡ American MS. in the Library of the Royal Institution. Curiously enough, only

How far less hopeful, at this time, was the language of Washington! To his Adjutant-General he writes on the 28th of November—"Could I have foreseen what I have experienced, and am likely to experience, no consideration upon earth should have induced me to accept this command. A regiment, or any subordinate department, would have been accompanied with ten times the satisfaction, perhaps ten times the honour." *

But, of all men, Washington was the least likely to yield to despondency. That indomitable resolution—that high and chivalrous sense of duty—that pure and unselfish patriotism which were his invariable characteristics—were never more eminently displayed than at the present trying and perilous crisis. By degrees, he infused order and discipline, as well as ardour, among his troops. "The Generals Washington and Lee," writes one of the chaplains of his army, "are upon the lines every day. New orders from his Excellency are read to the respective regiments every morning after prayers. The strictest government is taking place, and great distinction is made between officers and soldiers. Every one is made to know his place and keep in it, or be tied up and receive thirty or forty lashes according to his crime. Thousands are at work every day from four till eleven o'clock in the morning. It is surprising how much work has been done. The lines are extended almost from Cambridge to Mystic River, so that very soon it will be morally impossible for the enemy to get between the works." †

six days after the date of Lord Dartmouth's despatch, we find Horace Walpole fully cognizant of the "secret" and remarkable fact of the Empress Catherine having given her assent to letting out her troops for the subjugation of American freedom. "That miracle of gratitude, the Czarina," he writes to Mann on the 11th of September, 1775, "has consented to lend England twenty thousand Russians to be transported to America. The Parliament is to meet on the 20th of next month, and vote twenty-six thousand seamen! What a paragraph of blood is there! With what torrents must liberty be preserved in America!" *Walpole's Letters*, vol. vi. p. 252. Ed. 1857.

* Washington's Writings, by Sparks, vol. iii. p. 179.

† Washington's Writings, vol. iii. p. 491. "I hear," writes Walpole to Lady

Thus, by his energy, his genius, and perseverance, did Washington perform the double feat of keeping together, during a long winter, sixteen thousand raw and home-sick troops, and holding the British army blockaded in Boston. Moreover, so soon as reinforcements reached him at the beginning of March, he succeeded, by a 1776.
masterly stratagem, in seizing and fortifying the celebrated Dorchester Heights, commanding the British lines on Boston Neck, thus anticipating and outwitting General Howe, and placing the British army in a very critical position. In consequence of this movement, the British general found himself reduced to the necessity of removing his troops to some other part of the Continent, where provisions were likely to be more plentiful, and the country better adapted for carrying on successful military operations. Accordingly, on the 17th of March, the inhabitants of Boston were elated at the spectacle of a British Army being driven from the very Province, which they had been despatched across the Atlantic expressly to overawe and subdue. The troops were allowed to embark without being molested, and, on the following day, Washington entered Boston in triumph.

From Boston, General Howe proceeded to Halifax, and afterwards to Staten Island in the Province of New York, where at the end of June he succeeded in landing his troops without meeting with opposition. Here, on the 12th of July, he was joined by a large reinforcement of men which he had been long and anxiously expecting, and which in-

Ossory on the 3rd of August, "that the Congress have named General Washington Generalissimo, with two thousand a year, and five pounds a day for his table, He desired to be excused receiving the two thousand. If these folks will imitate both the Romans and Cromwellians, in self-denial and enthusiasm, we shall be horribly plagued with them." *Walpole's Letters*, vol. vi. p. 235. Ed. 1857. Again, Walpole writes, on the same day, to Sir Horace Mann—"The Congress, not asleep, have appointed a Generalissimo, Washington, allowed a very able officer, who distinguished himself in the last war. Well! we had better have gone on robbing the Indies. It was a more lucrative trade." *Ibid.* p. 236.

creased the British military force in America to nearly thirty thousand soldiers. Had the newly-arrived troops consisted entirely of British-born subjects, doubtless the satisfaction of General Howe would have been much greater. It comprised, however, several thousand kidnapped German soldiers, whom the cupidity of the Duke of Brunswick, of the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, and other German Princes, had induced to let out for hire to the British Government. The fact of these petty sovereigns—for the purpose of putting some paltry gold in their coffers—sending forth their subjects to perish of pestilence or by the sword, fighting against a gallant race with whom they had no shadow of a quarrel, very naturally excited the indignation of Europe. Even Frederick of Prussia, neither the most tender-hearted nor the most scrupulous of monarchs, not only denounced the traffic as a most scandalous one, but wherever, it is said, the unfortunate hirelings had occasion to march through any part of his dominions, used to levy a toll upon them as if they had been so many head of bullocks. "They had been sold," he said, "as cattle, and therefore he was entitled to exact the toll." The fact is a monstrous one, that by one of the articles of the treaty with the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, it was provided that an executioner and his attendants should form part of the Hessian establishment. But if the conduct of the German Princes, in letting out their subjects, and that of Great Britain, in hiring them, was an abomination in the eyes of the world, how much the more keenly and bitterly was it likely to be felt by the American people! Great Britain, they said, had not only declared war against her own Colonies, and against her own flesh and blood, but had arrayed against them a foreign soldiery, men who, being alien to them in language and lineage, would in all probability carry war into the heart of their country, attended by its very worst calamities and horrors. Surely, they argued, the mother-country might

have been satisfied with imposing taxes upon them, and invading their liberties, without letting loose a set of hireling murderers to spread rapine and desolation over the land. Such was the language which, prompted by the bitterest feelings of animosity, travelled from house to house and from cottage to cottage—those formerly happy and contented homes in which, scarcely twelve months since, every Englishman had met with an hospitable welcome, and on the walls of which the familiar portrait of the sovereign had hung, an object of veneration and love.

If the Americans had lately been loth to shake off their allegiance to the British Crown, no less anxious were they, now that the sword had been drawn, for the day that was to bring them Emancipation. At length, on the 7th of June, 1776, Richard Henry Lee rose in his place in the Assembly of the Representatives of the Confederated States, and, agreeably with instructions which he had received from the people of Virginia, made his famous proposition that America should declare herself a free and independent nation. Without immediately adopting this Resolution, Congress nominated a Committee of five persons, whose instructions were to draw up a statement of the various grievances, and other causes, which induced the American Colonies to desire to sever their connexion with Great Britain. That famous Committee consisted of Benjamin Franklin, of John Adams—who succeeded Washington as President of the United States—Thomas Jefferson, who became the third President,—Roger Sherman, of whom it was said by Jefferson that he never said a foolish thing in his life,—and Robert R. Livingston, afterwards Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Versailles. Their memorable Report to Congress is known to have been the composition, with some trifling alterations only, of Thomas Jefferson. To that eminent lawyer and accomplished man the task must have proved

an especially painful one. Almost to the last, his affection for the "old country" had induced him to sigh at the prospect of separation. In the whole empire, he writes to Attorney General Randolph, there was not a man who more cordially loved the union with Great Britain than himself. Even after American blood had been shed at Lexington, and when American exasperation had risen to fever-heat, we find him still anxiously expressing hopes that a reconciliation may be effected. Neither did Jefferson stand alone in his hesitation and regrets. Even the fiery Patrick Henry had, within the last two months, been averse to an immediate declaration of Independence. To Washington, Joseph Reed also writes in March—"There is a strange reluctance in the minds of many to cut the knot which ties us to Great Britain."* But the great majority of thinking Americans had become of the opinion that, having drawn the sword, no alternative was left but to fling away the scabbard. "Having weighed the arguments on both sides," writes General Lee to Patrick Henry in the month of March, "I am clearly of opinion that we must, as we value the liberties of America, or even her existence, without a moment's delay declare for Independence." † "I have no notion," said Joseph Reed, "of being hanged for half treason. When a subject draws his sword against his Prince, he must cut his way through, if he means afterwards to sit down in safety." ‡

In due time, the Committee of Five submitted to Congress the draft of a proposed Declaration of Grievances and Rights, which Congress subjected to a careful revision. With the exception of the sweeping, and apparently undue amount of obloquy, cast by the Americans personally on the King, little fault is apparently to be found with this

* Life of Joseph Reed, in Sparks's American Biography, vol. viii. p. 299, 2nd Series.

† Life of General Charles Lee; *Ibid.* p. 120.

‡ Life of Joseph Reed; *Ibid.* p. 299.

memorable document. Hitherto, whether justly or not, they had been accustomed to trace their grievances and their wrongs, not to the King, but to the aristocratic element which prevailed in the British Houses of Parliament, and especially to the British Ministers individually, as the constitutional and responsible advisers of their royal master. Hitherto, accordingly, it had been customary to name the Sovereign with reverence, and to canvass his actions with tenderness. During the lengthened period that Franklin had resided in England he had missed no opportunity, as he himself informs us, of explaining to his countrymen across the Atlantic, that the oppressive acts of which they complained, were the result neither of "*royal* nor *national*" measures, but were the work of a scheming Administration.* So also Washington, in remonstrating with General Howe on the harsh treatment to which Ethan Allen was subjected, intimates the deep regret of the American people that "the name of Howe, a name so dear to them,† should appear at the head of the catalogue of the instruments employed by a *wicked Ministry* for their destruction." Even at so late a period as when the famous "Olive Branch" was transmitted to England, we find the British military force in America designated by Congress, not as the Royal, but as the Parliamentary Army. But now, when it was confessedly the policy of Congress to propitiate the great mass of the British people—now that it had become of the highest importance to satisfy the consciences of such of their own people as retained their ancient reverence for the Kingly office, and for the private virtues of George the Third—it seems to have afforded the founders of the embryo Republic an easy escape from their difficulties, by laying the principal odium at the door of the well-intentioned monarch. To the King, therefore, in their memorable Declaration of Inde-

* Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. i. p. 366, Third Edition.

† Washington's Writings, by Sparks, vol. iii. p. 202. See *post*, pp. 150, 151.

pendence, they attributed their wrongs and the necessity for separation. The history of the reigning sovereign, they said, was a history of repeated injuries and usurpations. So evidently was it his intention to establish an absolute despotism, that it had become their duty, as well as their right, to secure themselves against further aggressions. "In every stage of these oppressions," proceeds the Declaration, "we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms. Our petitions have been answered only by repeated injuries. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. WE, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the supreme Judge of the World for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, 'FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES.'"

Yet, it was not till after many difficulties had been disposed of, nor till after many long and anxious discussions, that the whole of the Thirteen Colonies had been induced to agree to this famous Declaration. For a long time, the Deputies of four of the Colonies—South Carolina, Pennsylvania, New York, and Delaware—refused to attach their signatures to the deed of separation. Maryland, too, held out long, and acceded reluctantly.* At length, however, entire unanimity was obtained; and accordingly on an ever-memorable day, the FOURTH OF JULY 1776, America boldly and proudly announced to the world that she was an Independent Empire, and that the word Colonies no longer existed in her vocabulary.†

* According to the American historian, David Ramsay, so strong, in the important Province of South Carolina, was "the attachment of many to Great Britain, which they fondly called the mother country, that though they assented to the establishment of an independent Constitution, yet it was carried, after a long debate, that it was only to exist till a reconciliation between Great Britain and the Colonies shall take place." *Ramsay's History of the Revolution in South Carolina*, vol. i. p. 83. Trenton, 1785.

† Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. i. p. 182.

It may here be mentioned as a remarkable coincidence, that the lives of two of the most considerable and most honoured of the founders of the American Republic, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, should have been prolonged to the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, and that, on that same day, they should have severally breathed their last. Their dissolution took place in the year 1826; the former being in his ninety-first, and the latter in his eighty-fourth year. A few hours before the venerable Adams expired, as the firing of guns and the ringing of bells began to herald in the great Jubilee-day of America, his attendant enquired of the dying patriot whether he heard, and understood the meaning of, those sounds? "Oh yes!" he said. "It is the glorious Fourth of July. God bless it! God bless you all!" Some short time afterwards, a deferential request was made to him to suggest a sentiment, for delivery at the public dinner held in honour of the day. "I will give you," was his reply, "Independence for ever." Later in the day he was heard to murmur—"It is a great and glorious day." Just before he expired, his thoughts reverted to his early friend and former fellow-labourer in the cause of freedom. "Jefferson," he said, "survives." He was wrong. Jefferson had died at one o'clock in the afternoon. He himself lived till twenty minutes past six. Jefferson, a day or two before he breathed his last, had expressed a wish to be permitted to see the fiftieth anniversary of his imperishable triumph.

The announcement, that America had shaken off her dependence upon Great Britain, was received throughout her vast continent with extraordinary enthusiasm. The horrors of war, said her people, might for a time desolate their country; but, on the other hand, henceforth they would be emancipated from the hateful fetters of royalty, and the insolence of an imperious and prejudiced aristocracy.

"The reveries," writes Lee to Patrick Henry, "which I considered as mere golden castles in the air, at length bid fair for being realised. We shall now most probably see a mighty empire established, of freemen whose honour, property, and military glories, are not to be at the disposal of a sceptred tyrant, nor their consciences fettered by a proud domineering hierarchy." As the English Puritans in the seventeenth century had thrown down the statue of Charles the First—engraving on its site "EXIT TYRANNUS, REGUM ULTIMUS, *the tyrant is gone, the last of the Kings*"— so did the people of New York fling from its pedestal, and demolish, the equestrian statue of George the Third. In the various cities and villages of America, the Imperial crown ceased to be any longer an emblem or a sign. The term "royalty" grew to be either a byeword, or else became obsolete.

In the mean time, the military position of General Howe had been greatly strengthened by the arrival, in American waters, of a powerful naval force under the command of his brother, Vice Admiral Lord Howe. The mission, however, of the two brothers was far from being of an entirely hostile character. In addition to their military and naval powers, they were invested with due authority to act as special Commissioners for restoring amity between Great Britain and her Colonies, and to grant pardon in cases of submission. In England a favourable result had, not without some good reason, been anticipated from this irregular commission. Not only were these two high-minded men known to be opposed to the principles which had provoked hostilities, as well as to be sensitively anxious to prevent the further shedding of blood, but the additional fact of their name being a familiar and a cherished one in America, seemed to enhance their chances of success. In the late wars with the French, their brother George, the third Viscount Howe, had fought side by side with many Americans still living, to whose memories the

sweetness of his disposition, his chivalrous courage, and premature death in the hour of victory, had greatly endeared him. Massachusetts had even raised a monument in his honour. The General, moreover, who was now unhappily in arms against them, had also formerly been their fellow-soldier; had been a distinguished favourite of the illustrious Wolfe, and had led the detachment which first planted the British flag on the Heights of Abraham. But the "Olive Branch," from the British side of the Atlantic, had arrived too late. The British fleet had scarcely appeared off Sandy Hook before Lord July 12.
Howe had the mortification of learning that eight important days had elapsed since America had solemnly declared her Independence. Nor was he long in discovering that the national sentiment, which had reflected so much honour on his family, had passed away for ever. Grieved they were, said the Americans, that men, whom they had so sincerely revered, should have been induced to accept the command of an Expedition which was clearly designed to complete their subjugation. "America," said Congress, "is amazed to find the name of Howe in the catalogue of her enemies. She loved his brother."—"I hope," said Lord Howe, a short time afterwards, to an American officer, Colonel Palfrey, "that America will one day or other be convinced that, in our affection for that country, we also are Howes."—"His Lordship," writes Colonel Palfrey, "when speaking of his brother was greatly affected, and I could perceive a tear standing in his eye."*

Nevertheless, hopeless as were the prospects of success, the Commissioners prepared to use every endeavour to effect a reconciliation. Accordingly, Lord Howe, being extremely anxious to open a direct negotiation with Washington, despatched a letter to him under the protection of July 14.

* Palfrey's Life of Colonel William Palfrey, in Sparks's American Biography, vol. vii. p. 416, 2nd Series.

a flag of truce, which, however, in consequence of its repudiating his military rank, and being addressed to him simply as "George Washington, Esquire," was returned unopened by the American General. A second letter, in which he was addressed as "George Washington, Esquire, *&c. &c. &c.*," met with similar treatment. Of still less avail were certain circular letters, addressed by the Commissioners to the Governors of the different Provinces, one of which having fallen into the hands of Washington and having been forwarded by him to the American Government, Congress turned it to good account by publishing it with comments of their own. It was right and proper, they said, that the people of the United States should be apprized of what nature were the commissions, and what were the terms, with which the insidious court of Great Britain was endeavouring to amuse them. Washington, in like manner, treated the powers of the Commissioners with profound contempt. It was tolerably evident, he said, that those powers extended no further than an authority to grant pardons. The Americans had been guilty of no offence, and therefore needed no pardon. They were no longer the subjects of the King of England, but a free people, prepared to defend to the last what they believed to be their legitimate and indisputable rights.*

Lord Howe, however, was not yet entirely disheartened. Deeply anxious to prevent the further effusion of blood, he now turned his thoughts towards Franklin, with whom, as may be remembered, he had formerly associated on

* Marshall's Life of Washington, vol. ii. pp. 492—4; Reed's Life of Joseph Reed in Sparks's American Biography, vol. viii. pp. 317—19; Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. i. pp. 184—85; Moore's Diary of the American Revolution, vol. i. p. 274. So far back as the 15th of April Washington had written to John Adams:—"I have ever thought, and am still of opinion, that no terms of accommodation will be offered by the British Ministry but such as cannot be accepted by America. We have nothing, my dear Sir, to depend upon but the protection of a kind Providence, and unanimity among ourselves." *Washington's Writings, by Sparks*, vol. iii. p. 356.

very agreeable terms in the British metropolis. He recalled to mind how often they had discussed American affairs at the cheerful tea-table of his sister, Mrs. Howe, in Grafton Street, and how he had seen tears of pleasure start into the eyes of the great philosopher whenever a prospect of returning peace and good-will had presented itself.* We have seen, however, how completely the wrongs inflicted on his country, and the insults offered to himself, had hardened the heart of Franklin towards the British nation; and accordingly, when Lord Howe appealed to him for assistance in his work of pacification, his reply was not only cold and unsatisfactory, but July 20. haughty almost to discourtesy. Speaking of Great Britain as "your proud and uninformed country," he argued that her persistent ill-treatment of America had put reunion utterly out of the question. "It is impossible," he writes, "we should think of a submission to a Government that has, with the most wanton barbarity and cruelty, burnt our defenceless towns in the middle of winter, excited the savages to murder our farmers, and our slaves to murder their masters, and is even now bringing foreign mercenaries to deluge our settlements with blood. These atrocious injuries have extinguished every remaining spark of affection for that parent-country we once held so dear." Before America, continued Franklin, could entertain any treaty of amity or peace, Great Britain must consent and agree to negotiate with her as a free and separate State; to punish the late Governors of Colonies who had caused and afterwards aggravated the mischief, and to rebuild the towns which British soldiers had destroyed. "I know," he concluded, "your great motive in coming hither was the hope of being instrumental in [effecting] a reconciliation; and I believe when you find *that* impossible, on any terms given you to

* Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. ii. p. 27.

propose, you will relinquish so odious a command, and return to a more honourable private station." *

Thus, all hope of reconciliation being for the present at an end, the two armies prepared to confront each other with vigour in the field. Fortune, for a considerable time, favoured the British. On the 22nd of August, General Howe, under the protection of the guns of the Fleet, landed his forces on Long Island—a fertile tract of land in view of the Island and City of New York—
Aug. 27. and five days afterwards fought the battle of Brooklyn, in which the Americans lost about two thousand men in killed and wounded, and nearly eleven hundred prisoners. Unfortunately for the cause of the Americans, their accomplished general, Nathaniel Greene, lay at this time helplessly prostrated on a sick-bed. His agitation and anxiety, as the roar of cannon reached his ear, and as adverse news was from time to time broken to him, may be readily imagined. "Gracious God!" exclaimed the Quaker-hero—"to be confined at such a time!" † Washington too—who, on hearing the sound of firing, had hurried from New York to the scene of action, and who arrived only in time to witness the pursuit and slaughter of his troops—betrayed no less vehemently the anguish of his mind.‡ New York now lay at the mercy of the victors. Even Washington, hopeful and resolute as was his nature, seemed half to despair.

General Howe's success on Long Island obtained for him the Order of the Bath, as well as high commendation from his employers. "Those," writes Lord George Germaine to him on the 18th of October 1776, "who, in the earlier part of your life—from an observation of the inborn courage and active spirit which you manifested in inferior stations—were led to form favourable conjectures

* Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. ii. pp. 24—28.
† Greene's Life of Nathaniel Greene, pp. 39, 40.
‡ Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. i. p. 191.

relative to your future exploits, will, with me, be happy to find their expectations answered, and will be agreeably surprised to see you making such hasty advances towards military excellence, by thus uniting to the fire of youth all the wisdom and conduct of the most experienced commander." *

Conciliation, rather than conquest, was the object of Lord Howe, and, consequently, speculating that the result of the late battle was likely to have abridged the high demands of the American people, he decided on making another attempt to open a negotiation. With this object in view, he despatched, on parole, to Philadelphia, General John Sullivan whom he had taken prisoner on Long Island, to whom he confided a verbal conciliatory proposition for the consideration of the leaders of the Revolution. It was impossible for him, said the British Admiral, to treat with Congress in its assumed independent legislative capacity, but, on the other hand, if two or three of its members would meet him as private gentlemen, he would gladly confer with them on the present deplorable state of affairs. The invitation, though somewhat tardily and haughtily, was accepted by Congress, and accordingly a selection was made of three of the most uncompromising republicans of its body, to attend at the appointed conference. Those persons were Benjamin Franklin, Edward Routledge of South Carolina, and John Adams. The scene of the meeting was a house on Staten Island, nearly facing the town of Amboy in New Jersey; Lord Howe despatching his barge to convey his visitors across the Sound, and receiving them with the utmost courtesy. To induce them to return to their allegiance to the King of Great Britain was of course the drift of the arguments made use of by Lord Howe. Neither the King nor his Ministers,

Sept. 11.

* American MS. in the Library of the Royal Institution.

he assured them, entertained any other than a kindly feeling for the American people. Every oppressive Act of Parliament, of which America complained, should be revised. Redress should be rendered for every grievance which had induced her to declare herself independent. The delegates listened apathetically and unconvinced. The memory of former injuries and insults—of petitions thrown unanswered on one side—of insolent language levelled at them in the British Parliament—and lastly of American blood shed, not only by British bayonets, but by German hirelings—was engraven far too deeply on the hearts of those uncompromising patriots to admit of a moment's hesitation. America, was their final and haughty answer, was willing to treat for peace with Great Britain; but only as a free and independent nation would she condescend to negotiate. Similarly lofty was their reply to Lord Howe, when, after having assured them of his personal affection for America, he intimated how deep would be the pain which her impending fall and humiliation must occasion him. It was a pain, they said, which his Lordship might rest satisfied they would do their utmost to spare him.* Lord Howe had now no alternative but the mournful one of breaking up the meeting, leaving the delegates to return to, and to report progress at, Philadelphia.

The breaking up of the conference on Staten Island, was followed by a series of successful military operations on the part of the British, which, but for the fatal mistakes and oversights committed by the British Generals, might have gone far to demolish the new liberties of America. "I do not know," said Lord North, "whether our Generals will frighten the enemy, but I know they frighten me whenever I think of them." † The disaster, which weighed the heaviest on the mind of Washington, was the

* Franklin's Life and Writings, vol. ii. p. 22.

† Political Life of Viscount Barrington, p. 185.

fall of New York. Washington happened to be at his Sept. 15.
head-quarters at Haarlem, about nine miles from that city, when, for the second time, the distant roar of artillery announced to him that the British, in his absence, were pressing vigorously upon his troops. For the second time, he was to be seen riding impetuously towards the scene of action; destined again to behold a disheartening scene of slaughter and rout. "As soon," he writes, "as I heard the firing, I rode with all possible despatch towards the place of landing, when, to my great surprise and mortification, I found the troops that had been posted in the lines retreating with the utmost precipitation."* "We made," writes General Greene from Haarlem Heights to a friend, "a miserable, disorderly retreat, from New York owing to the dastardly conduct of the militia, who ran at the appearance of the enemy's advanced Guard. Fellows's and Parsons's Brigades ran away from about fifty men, and left his Excellency on the ground, within eighty yards of the enemy, so vexed at the infamous conduct of the troops, that he sought death rather than life." † In the intensity of his vexation and wrath, Washington is said to have thrown himself in front of the terrified fugitives, threatening to run them through the body with his sword unless they stood their ground, and even snapping his pistol at those who persisted in continuing their ignominious flight. "I used every means in my power," he writes, "to rally and get them into some order, but my attempts were fruitless and ineffectual, and, on the appearance of a small party of the enemy—not more than sixty or seventy—their disorder increased, and they ran away in the greatest confusion, without firing a single shot." ‡ So lost, in the agony of the hour, was Washington to every consideration of personal safety, that his staff were com-

* Washington's Writings, by Sparks, vol. iv. p. 94.
† *Ibid.* pp. 94—5, *note.*
‡ *Ibid.* p. 94.

pelled to seize hold of the bridle of his horse and forcibly withdraw him from the field.* That day General, now Sir William Howe, entered New York in triumph.

The capture of New York was succeeded by the battle
Oct. 28. of White Plains. There, upon ground on which a busy railway station, on the Haarlem line, now stands, and near which a residence of Washington is still reverentially pointed out to the traveller, Sir William Howe, at the head of thirteen thousand British, defeated eighteen thousand three hundred Americans. Less than three weeks afterwards, Fort Washington, with its valuable magazine of
Nov. 16. stores, was gallantly stormed and captured by the British troops; no fewer than three thousand Americans being either killed, wounded, or taken prisoners. Washington, as he beheld the slaughter of his troops, is said to have "cried with the tenderness of a child." "This is a most unfortunate affair," he writes to his brother, "and has given me great mortification." † Before the close of the year, other successes attended the royal arms. General Clinton had compelled the Americans to abandon Rhode Island. Lord Cornwallis, having effected a landing in New
Nov. 18. Jersey, had driven the enemy beyond the Hakensack River and overrun the entire Province. Sir William Howe had advanced his troops to the banks of the Delaware. The American Congress had been forced to transfer its sittings
Dec. 20. from Philadelphia to Baltimore. General Lee, one of the ablest of the American commanders, had been surprised
Dec. 13. at night in a private house and carried off in triumph. Washington himself might at one time be said to be a fugitive.

In the mean time, while this unhappy warfare was deso-

* Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. i. pp. 198, 199; Gordon's Hist. of the American Revolution, vol. ii. p. 327.

† Gordon's Hist. of the American Revolution, vol. ii. p. 351; Washington's Writings, vol. iv. p. 183.

lating the New World, political prejudice was still at work in the Old. On the 31st of October, three days after the Battle of White Plains, the British Parliament reassembled at Westminster. As on like former occasions, the speech from the throne was replete, as far as related to America, with misrepresentations and misinformation. Again, the noble stand which the Americans were making for their liberties was ascribed to deliberate and long-concerted treason. Again, the wise and dignified founders of the great Republic were spoken of as a mere set of daring and desperate rebels—as men who, to suit their own selfish purposes, had deluded their fellow-countrymen into exchanging the blessings of law and of order, for the calamities of war and the tyranny of their own people. As for the war itself, so little capable were Ministers of appreciating its magnitude and probable duration, that "*another campaign*" was mentioned as being all that might be required to bring it to a successful close.* "There is no man, who has access to his Majesty," writes Lord Rockingham, "who has integrity and magnanimity of mind sufficient to enable him to go and say to his Majesty—'the measures and policy of the Ministers towards America are erroneous; the adherence to them is destruction.' Of *this*," adds his lordship, "at least we are certain, that force, violence, and cruelty have brought the country into this direful situation. The reverse of such measures is the only thing fit to try." †

In Parliament, the obstinate and disastrous policy pursued by Ministers continued to provoke many fierce and eloquent animadversions. In the House of Commons—where an Amendment to the Address to the Throne was moved by Lord John Cavendish and seconded by the Marquis of Granby—it was ably and boldly argued by those noblemen, that unless great wrongs had been

* Parl. Hist., vol. xviii. cols. 1366—7.
† Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. p. 303.

inflicted, a whole people would never have been induced to revolt; that the errors of Ministers, and the ignorance of Parliament as to the real feelings and requirements of the people of America, had driven thirteen large Provinces to despair; that their reiterated complaints and petitions for redress had been dismissed without a hearing; and lastly, that not fewer than thirteen weeks had been culpably allowed to elapse between the appointment of the chief Commissioner and his departure from England. Under all these circumstances it was insisted that the Americans—though certainly to blame for having too precipitately resorted to violent measures—had doubtless felt themselves justified in declaring themselves a sovereign people, and therefore it behoved the House to express its respect for the spirit and principles which had prompted them to struggle for their rights. "We should look with the utmost shame and horror," proceeds the Amendment, "on any events tending to break the spirit of any large part of the British nation; to bow them to an abject unconditional submission to any power whatsoever; to annihilate their liberties, and to subdue them to servile principles and passive habits, by the mere force of foreign mercenary arms."*

The amendment was supported by several members with considerable ability. "Where," it was asked, "are those mighty leaders to be found, whom the Americans are said to obey so implicitly, and who govern them with so despotic a rule? They have no grandees among them. Their soil is not productive of nobility. In no country are there so few individuals possessed of a commanding or extensive influence. The President of their supreme Assembly is a merchant. The General of their armies is a private gentleman." The Americans, argued Wilkes, had merely followed

* Parl. Hist., vol. xviii. col. 1401.

the example set them by the mother-country, when she rose in arms against the tyranny of James the Second. When that monarch, he said, quitted the kingdom, England had pronounced the throne to have been abdicated, and chose for herself another King. In like manner, when the late laws, passed against the Americans, had thrown them into a state of anarchy, they declared that the British Legislature had abdicated its functions, and that they were entitled to choose a government for themselves. Great Britain, insisted Wilkes, was engaged in a savage and piratical, as well as an unjust, war. "The evil," he exclaimed, "grows more desperate. Last year only twelve Colonies humbly petitioned the throne. This year, by the accession of Georgia, we have seen a federal union of thirteen free and powerful provinces asserting their Independency as high and mighty States, and setting our power at defiance. This was done, with circumstances of spirit and courage to which posterity will do justice. It was done directly after the safe landing of your whole force." *

By both Colonel Barré and Fox, it was prophetically argued that a prolonged contest with America would inevitably plunge Great Britain into a war with France. "The attack will shortly be made," exclaimed Barré, "and made within the hearing of those who now sit in this House. Gentlemen may laugh; but I dare aver that those who laugh now, will, in the moment of danger, be lying in tears on their backs, like cowards." † It had been contended, said Fox, that American Independence was opposed to the interests of France and Spain, but such an argument was repugnant to common sense. "Is not," he asked, "the division of an enemy's power advantageous? Is not a free country, engaged in trade, less formidable than the

* Parl. Hist., vol. xviii. col. 1407.

† *Ibid.*, cols. 1425—6.

ambition of an old corrupted government, their only formidable rival in Europe?" *

Notwithstanding these wise and spirited appeals on the part of the Opposition, they divided only eighty-seven votes against two hundred and forty-two. In the House of Lords, where Lord Rockingham moved an amendment to the Address, the minority actually numbered only twenty-six.†

1777. It was at the close of this Session that, in a memorable and heart-stirring appeal to his brother Peers, the illustrious
May 30. Chatham endeavoured to avert the dismemberment of the empire, and a continuance of the horrors of civil war. For the last two years, he had been prevented by illness from occupying his accustomed seat in the House of Lords, and even now, when he at length made his appearance, his bearing was still that of an invalid, and his limbs were swathed in flannels.‡ Despite, however, the languor which seemed to oppress him, he delivered his sentiments with much of the fervour, and in all the beautiful language, of former days. Slowly and solemnly he moved an address to the throne, deprecating the unnatural war which Great Britain was waging against her Colonies, and beseeching his Majesty, speedily and effectually, to bring it to a close, by authorising a sweeping redress of those accumulated

* Parl. Hist., vol. xviii. col. 1430. "Charles Fox," writes Walpole, "answered Lord George [Germaine] in one of his finest and most animated orations, and with severity to the answered person. He made Lord North's conciliatory proposition be read, which, he said, his Lordship seemed to have forgotten; and he declared *he thought it better to abandon America than attempt to conquer it.* Mr. Gibbon, author of the Roman History, a very good judge—and, being on the Court side, a very impartial one—told me he never heard a more masterly speech than Fox's in his life." *Walpole's Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 80.

† Parl. Hist. vol. xviii. cols. 1392, 1431.

‡ Duke of Grafton's MS. Memoirs; Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. vi. p. xvii. Appendix. Lord Chatham had been ill and secluded from the world since the spring of 1775. "Lord Chatham," writes Lord Camden to the Duke of Grafton on the 4th of January 1776, "continues in the same melancholy way; and the house is so shut up that his sons are not permitted to receive visitors." *Earl Stanhope's Hist.* vol. vi. p. 110.

grievances under which America was labouring. By no other means, he said, could Great Britain recover for herself the affections of the American people. "The Americans," he exclaimed, "are rebels; but what are they rebels for? Surely not for defending their unquestionable rights." The danger was imminent; the remedy ought to be immediate. Forty thousand German boors, he said, could never conquer ten times the number of British freemen. They might ravage, but they could never conquer America. "No!" he exclaimed; "it is impossible. You cannot conquer the Americans. You talk of your numerous friends to annihilate the Congress, and of your powerful forces to disperse their army, but"—and he raised his staff as he spoke—"I might as well talk of driving them before me with this crutch." Take away, he argued, a British army from the protection of the fleet, and it would be starved. If dispersed, it would be cut to pieces in detail. "You have been three years," he said, "teaching them the art of war, and they are apt scholars. I will venture to tell your Lordships that the American gentry will make officers enough fit to command the troops of all the European powers. What you have sent there are too many to make peace; too few to make war. You cannot make them respect you. You cannot make them wear your cloth. You will plant an invincible hatred in their breasts against you. Coming from the stock they do, they can never respect you." Great Britain, he exclaimed, had said to America—"Lay down your arms," and America had replied in the language of the Spartan—"Come and take them!" Great Britain had tried to exact unconditional submission. She ought now to try the effect of unconditional redress.* "My Lords," he said, on rising a second time to speak, "you have been the aggressors from the beginning,

* Parl. Hist., vol. xix. cols. 316—318.

I say again this country has been the aggressor. You have made descents upon their coasts. You have burnt their towns, plundered their country, made war upon the inhabitants, confiscated their property, proscribed and imprisoned their persons." Again and again he urged the House to redress the grievances of America by repealing the laws of which she complained, and acknowledging their right to dispose of their own money. "The people of America," he concluded, "look upon Parliament as the authors of their miseries. Their affections are estranged from their Sovereign. Let, then, reparation come from the hands that inflicted the injuries. Let conciliation succeed chastisement, and I do maintain that Parliament will again recover its authority; that his Majesty will be once more enthroned in the hearts of his American subjects; and that your Lordships—as contributing to so great, glorious, salutary and benignant a work—will receive the prayers and benedictions of every part of the British Empire." *

Among those who listened to this celebrated speech was the future prime minister, William Pitt, the son of the illustrious orator. To his mother, Lady Chatham, he writes on the following day—"I cannot help expressing to you how happy, beyond description, I feel in reflecting that my father was able to exert, in their full vigour, the sentiments and eloquence which have always distinguished him. His first speech took up half an hour, and was full of all his usual force and vivacity."—"He spoke a second time, in answer to Lord Weymouth, to explain the object of his motion, and his intention to follow it by one for the repeal of all the Acts of Parliament which form the system of chastisement. This he did in a flow of eloquence, and with a beauty of expression, animated and striking beyond conception." † Unfortunately, the eloquence of the great Earl

* Parl. Hist., vol. xix. cols. 343—4.

† Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. pp. 437—8.

produced no better results than it had done on former similar occasions. "The Rebels," exclaimed Lord Lyttelton insultingly, "have added, to all the horrors of war, the brutality of savages and the treachery of cowards."* Ministers achieved a complete triumph. Chatham's motion was rejected by a majority of ninety-nine to twenty-eight.

* Parl. Hist., vol. xix. col. 333.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Critical position of the American Army—Battles of Trenton, Princeton, and Brandywine—Philadelphia occupied by the British—Battle of German Town—Expedition of General Burgoyne—He gains the Battle of Beymus's Heights, but is compelled to withdraw his forces, and at last to surrender—Is kindly treated by the American Generals—Infatuation of the Home Government—Chatham's Speech on the employment of Indians in the War—His Amendment to the Address rejected—The French Government friendly to American Independence.

WHEN lately we took leave of the shores of America, General Clinton was master of Rhode Island; Lord Cornwallis had overrun New Jersey; Sir William Howe had driven Washington across the Delaware. Had the British Army been commanded by a younger and more adventurous General than Sir William Howe, the probability seems to be that much greater advantage would have been taken of the enemy's weakness and despondency; that the campaign would have been prolonged into the winter months; that the Delaware would have been crossed; Philadelphia captured; and not impossibly that the submission of the entire continent would have followed. It was a crisis in American affairs which filled even the mind of Washington with apprehensions. "He trembled," he said, "for the fate of America, which nothing but the infatuation of the enemy could have
Dec. 18. saved." * "If every nerve," he writes to his brother, "be not strained, to recruit the new army with all possible expedition, I think the game is pretty nearly up." † Again,

* Gordon's Hist. of the American Revolution, vol. ii. p. 390.
† Washington's Writings, by Sparks, vol. iv. p. 231.

in communicating to his Adjutant-General, Colonel Reed, an intended attack on the British at Trenton, he writes—"For Heaven's sake, keep this to yourself, as the discovery of it may prove fatal to us; our numbers, sorry am I to say, being less than I had had any conception of; but necessity, dire necessity will, nay must, justify an attack." *

Happily the attack, alluded to by Washington, not only proved to be an eminently successful one, but, for a time, it changed the tide of affairs. Sir William Howe, on withdrawing his army into winter-quarters, had extended his cantonments to so imprudent a length, as to afford a favourable opportunity to Washington of dealing a serious blow at the British. "Now," said the American General, "that their wings are so spread, is the time to clip them." Accordingly, on the night of Christmas Day, in the face of a violent storm of hail and snow, and notwithstanding a mass of floating ice clogged the Delaware, he succeeded in transporting two thousand five hundred men across the river to Trenton, where he surprised a body of fifteen hundred Hessians, nearly a thousand of whom he took prisoners.† Following 1777.
up his advantage, the American general, a few days afterwards, executed a well-conceived and successful attack on Jan. 3.
a British brigade at Princeton. "We found Princeton," he

* Washington's Writings, by Sparks, vol. iv. p. 241.

† "In justice to the officers and men," writes Washington to the President of Congress, "I must add that their behaviour on this occasion reflects the highest honour upon them. The difficulty of passing the river in a very severe night, and their march through a violent storm of snow and hail, did not in the least abate their ardour; but when they came to the charge, each seemed to vie with the other in pressing forward; and, were I to give a preference to any particular corps, I should do great injustice to the others. Colonel Baylor, my first aide-de-camp, will have the honour of delivering this to you; and from him you may be made acquainted with many other particulars. His spirited behaviour upon every occasion requires me to recommend him to your particular notice." In consequence of Washington's recommendation, Colonel Baylor—who carried with him, in addition to the despatch of which this is an extract, a Hessian standard, which he delivered to Congress—was presented by that Assembly with a horse properly caparisoned for military service, and recommended for promotion to the command of a Regiment of cavalry. *Washington's Writings, by Sparks*, vol. iv. p. 248.

writes to the President of Congress, "with only three regiments and three troops of light horse in it, two of which were on their march to Trenton. These three regiments, especially the two first, made a gallant resistance, and in killed, wounded, and prisoners, must have lost five hundred men. Upwards of a hundred of them were left dead on the field."* On the side of the Americans was mortally wounded a gallant officer, General Hugh Mercer, a native of Scotland, who, in his youth, had served as a surgeon's mate at the Battle of Culloden, and who had afterwards been the companion in arms of Washington, in the war with the French in America. Throughout the action at Princeton, Washington is described as exposing his person in the hottest of the fight, and as doing his utmost to animate his troops by his encouraging words and fearless example.†.

The success obtained by Washington at Princeton he followed up by a series of masterly manœuvres which brought the campaign to a close. New Jersey was delivered from the sway of Great Britain. The Congress was again enabled to hold its sittings at Philadelphia.

The first event of importance, by which the succeeding campaign was distinguished, was the removal by sea of the British army from the Jerseys. Sir William Howe, leaving behind him at New York eight thousand men under the command of General Clinton, sailed, on the 23rd of June, with his army from Staten Island, and on the 24th of August, after a tedious voyage, landed them on the banks of the Chesapeake. Washington, rightly conjecturing that the object of the British General was the capture of Philadelphia, immediately followed him to the banks of the Brandywine, where, on the 11th of September, was fought the important battle to which that river has given its name. The Americans

* Washington's Writings, by Sparks, vol. iv. p. 259.
† Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. i. p. 232.

were signally defeated. According to Sir William Howe's computation, about nine hundred of them were killed and wounded, and about four hundred taken prisoners. The remainder, pursued by Lord Cornwallis, made the best of their way to Philadelphia, from which city the Congress, at the approach of the British forces, fled in the first instance to Lancaster, and subsequently to York Town. On the 26th of September Cornwallis entered Philadelphia in triumph; the band of the advanced guard, as they marched through the streets, playing "God save the King."

In the mean time, Washington, defeated though not disheartened, continued to hover in the neighbourhood of the British army, the head quarters of which were now stationed at German Town, about six miles from Philadelphia. Too weak, at this time, to cope in the open field with the disciplined forces of his adversary, it was only by successful stratagem, and by rapid and daring attacks, that he could hope to recover the ground he had lost. To precipitate his forces, therefore, suddenly into the thick of the British army—to drive the enemy, if possible, out of Philadelphia, and thus revolutionize the present gloomy condition of American affairs—became the half-desperate resolve of the indomitable patriot. Accordingly, on the night of the 3rd of October, he led his troops stealthily to German Town, in sight of which place he found himself, in a foggy daybreak, on the following morning. The advanced British Corps, upon which it was the chance of the attacking party to fall, and upon whose steadiness or unsteadiness depended the fortune of the day, was the fortieth Regiment of Foot. Unluckily for the success of the expedition, the regiment happened to be one of the most highly disciplined, and most devoted to its colours, of any in the British Service. Thus, though surprised, and though forced back for the moment by irresistible numbers, it soon recovered itself, and offered a formidable front to the foe. With great promptitude and

coolness, its gallant commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Musgrave,* flung himself, with six companies, into a stone-built house in the village, from the windows of which they did great execution among the Americans, and in which, in defiance of four pieces of cannon which were brought to bear upon them, they defended themselves till the British force had time to form. While the conflict was thus prevailing, the density of the atmosphere—occasioned by the smoke of gunpowder blending with the fog—led to the Americans mistaking their own regiments for those of the British, and firing into them with fatal precision. The result was a panic, which no entreaties nor threats on the part of their officers could control; the whole force taking to flight, leaving behind them as many as fourteen hundred of their companions killed, wounded, or prisoners. "It was a bloody day:" wrote Washington to his brother; "Would to Heaven I could add that it had been a more fortunate one for us!" †

Yet, let it not be imagined that, as a consequence of the accumulated ill-successes which had befallen Washington on the field, he had in any degree forfeited the confidence and admiration of his fellow-countrymen. On the contrary, the rude peasantry whom he had converted into disciplined soldiers, and whom he had taught to confront, without

* Lieutenant Colonel, afterwards General Sir Thomas Musgrave, Bart., commenced his military career as an ensign in the Third Foot, or Buffs; his first commission bearing date December 31, 1754. "Lieutenant Colonel Musgrave especially distinguished himself at the Battle of Germantown, on the 4th of October 1777, by throwing himself with six companies of the 40th Regiment into a large stone house in the face of the enemy, and, although surrounded by a Brigade supported by four pieces of artillery, made a most gallant and successful defence until Major General Grey and Brigadier Agnew had, by a vigorous attack, repulsed the American troops that had penetrated into the upper part of the village. A medal commemorative of the gallantry of Colonel Musgrave and of the 40th Regiment on this occasion was subsequently awarded to the officers and men." From *official information*. This gallant officer, "after a lengthened and honourable career of usefulness to his King and country," died, holding the rank of General, December 31, 1812, being the same day of the same month on which his first commission was dated.

† Washington's Writings, vol. v. p. 103.

despondency, the long-dreaded legions of Great Britain, continued to follow him lovingly, trustingly, and uncomplainingly. "Your troops," once observed the Count de Vergennes to the American Commissioners at Paris, "have behaved well on several occasions; but nothing has struck me so much as that General Washington should have attacked and given battle to General Howe. To bring an army, raised within a year, to this, promises everything." * Later in the bitter winter of this year, although hundreds of Washington's soldiers were without blankets, and although, for miles, their march might be tracked by the blood left by their naked feet on the snow, yet not a voice was heard to murmur at their idolised leader.

Washington, after his ill-success at German Town, withdrew his army to White Marsh, a strong position about fourteen miles from Philadelphia, from whence Sir William Howe made many, but always ineffectual, attempts to draw him into the open country. The British General accordingly, finding the season far advanced, proceeded to take up his comfortable winter-quarters in Philadelphia; while Washington withdrew his army to Valley Forge in the hills, a still stronger position than White Marsh, where the site of his head-quarters, during the winter of 1777, is still pointed out as an object of pious interest by his admiring fellow-countrymen. †

* Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. i. pp. 259—60.

† "It must be confessed," writes the English historian of the American War, "that on the whole the British arms under Sir William Howe were attended with success; but this success was never duly followed up and improved. That Commander had several opportunities of defeating the American army, and thereby putting an end to the war. At Long Island, in the Jerseys, at Brandywine, at White Marsh, and at Valley Forge, fortune had placed the enemy within his grasp, but he declined to seize the offered advantage. None of his military exploits possessed either plan, object, or decision; and the only fruit derived from the several victories of Sir William Howe, during the campaign of 1777, amounted to no more than the acquisition of good winter-quarters for the British army at Philadelphia." *Stedman's Hist. of the American War*, vol. i. p. 317. Stedman himself served in the British Army in America, under Sir William Howe, Sir Henry Clinton, and Lord Cornwallis.

Happily for the cause of liberty, and for the interests of the people of the United States, fortune proved more favourable to their arms in another, and more important, part of the vast continent. The invasion of America from the side of Canada, and thus effecting a communication with the army under Sir William Howe, had, for some time past, been a favourite project of the War Department in England, and was one which, after due consideration, was approved by the Cabinet. The command of this important expedition was conferred on General John Burgoyne, a natural son of Lord Bingley.* Hitherto Burgoyne had been principally known to his countrymen as a man of wit, literature, and pleasure. His figure was commanding; his manners were eminently engaging; his reputation for courage had never been called in question. He had entered the army at an early age, and, while quartered at Preston in Lancashire, had established a powerful aristocratic connexion for himself by winning the affections of Lady Charlotte Stanley, daughter of Edward eleventh Earl of Derby, whom he persuaded to elope with him, and to become his wife. In 1762, Burgoyne had served with some reputation, as a brigadier-general, in the war in Portugal, and, on his return, had obtained a seat in the House of Commons.† As a speaker in Parliament, he rose to some eminence, but by his literary productions alone he deserves to be remembered by posterity. His comic opera, "The Lord of the Manor," was long a favourite on the stage. His comedy, "The Heiress," is one of the most pleasing in our language. He was also a contributor to

* Robert Benson, created Baron of Bingley in the county of York 1713, died July 21, 1780, when the title became extinct.

† Junius seems to have entertained no very high opinion of Burgoyne as a soldier. "Let me ask your Grace," he writes to the Duke of Grafton on the 12th of December 1769, "for what military merits you have been pleased to reward him with military government?" Since the date of this letter Burgoyne had served some time in America under General Gage, but without having been afforded much opportunity of improving his military experience.

"The Rolliad;" nor have some of his lighter poetical pieces wanted admirers.* At the fashionable play-tables of the day, whether of hazard or skill, Burgoyne was a successful and therefore a formidable antagonist. Junius more than hints that he played unfairly. "If any man," he ironically writes, "were to accuse him of taking his stand at a gaming-table, and watching, with the soberest attention, for a fair opportunity of engaging a drunken young nobleman at piquet, he would undoubtedly consider it as an infamous aspersion upon his character, and resent it like a man of honour." It is but fair, however, to observe, that General Burgoyne's acquaintances seem to have completely acquitted him of this cruel anonymous charge. "Junius," writes Horace Walpole, "was thought unjust; as he [Burgoyne] was never supposed to do more than play very well." †

The army in Canada, commanded by Burgoyne, consisted of upwards of seven thousand men, British and German, exclusive of a powerful train of artillery. At first the march of the man of fashion resembled a triumph. As he advanced, the Americans—leaving their provisions, artillery, and military stores behind them—precipitately evacuated Ticonderoga, from which post Burgoyne drove them before him to Fort Edward, on the banks of the Hudson, which

June 30.

* The following pleasing stanzas, from the "Lord of the Manor," may be taken as a favourable specimen of General Burgoyne's muse—

Encompassed in an angel's frame,
An angel's virtues lay;
Too soon did Heaven assert the claim,
And call its own away.

My Anna's worth, my Anna's charms,
Must never more return:
What now shall fill these widowed arms?
Ah, me! my Anna's urn.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. vi. p. 494. Ed. 1857. See also Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 293; 3rd Edition.

in like manner they abandoned at the approach of the British army; bending their flight in the direction of the memorable Springs of Saratoga. It was now, while in pursuit of the enemy, that Burgoyne's difficulties commenced. The face of the country was intersected by streams and morasses. His heavy artillery was a great incumbrance to him. Entire trees, felled by the Americans, were laid, with other obstructions, across his path. His provisions began to fail him. In consequence of a want of boats to carry his army across the Hudson, no fewer than forty bridges had to be constructed. Moreover, while the enemy was constantly receiving reinforcements of men, alike from the neighbouring towns and from the mountains, Burgoyne's ranks, in consequence of unprofitable skirmishes and other casualties, were hourly becoming thinner and
Aug. 20. thinner. "The prospect of the campaign," he writes, "is much less prosperous than when I wrote last. Wherever the King's forces point, militia, to the amount of three or four thousand, assemble in twenty-four hours. They bring with them their subsistence, and, the alarm over, they return to their farms. The Hampshire Grants, in particular—a country unpeopled, and almost unknown, during the last war—now abounds in the most active and most rebellious race of the Continent, and hangs, like a gathering storm, upon my left. In all parts, the industry and management in driving cattle and removing corn, are indefatigable and certain, and it becomes impracticable to move without portable magazines. Another most embarrassing circumstance is the want of communication with Sir William Howe. Of the messengers I have sent, I know of two being hanged, and am ignorant whether any of the rest arrived." *

It was the middle of September when Burgoyne, relin-

* Private Letter to Lord George Germaine, dated August 20, 1777; *Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England*, vol. vi. p. 266.

quishing his communications with Canada, transported his army across the Hudson, and took post on the heights of Saratoga. The American force, under General Gates, was at this time encamped in a very advantageous post on Beymus's Heights, a low range of hills in front of Stillwater, whither Burgoyne advanced in hopes of forcing them to give him battle. The British army was by this time in a most perilous as well as wasted condition. Could Albany, indeed, be reached—and Albany was only twenty-five miles distant—not only would the British army be safe, but the primary object of the costly expedition would have been obtained. That desirable result, however, was denied them. Burgoyne, it is true, after a well-contested engagement which lasted for four hours, succeeded in defeating Sept. 19. the Americans, but unfortunately victory, instead of improving his condition, rendered it even more critical than it had previously been. His casualties amounted to as many as six hundred men. Most of his artillery-men were killed at their guns. One regiment alone, the 62nd, lost more than two-thirds of its officers. Nevertheless, superior as was the force which confronted Burgoyne, willingly would he have attempted to cut his way to Albany, but humanity prevented his abandoning his wounded to their fate. Influenced by this consideration, as well as calculating on the probability of Sir Henry Clinton speedily making a diversion in his favour, he resolved to entrench his troops upon the ground which they at present occupied. The bitterness of hope deferred was now added to his other distresses. Hour after hour, and day after day, came and went, and yet there appeared no sign of approaching succour. Death continued to spread its ravages among his ranks. His horses perished from starvation. A like fate threatened his followers. Nightfall completed their miseries. The want of sleep, occasioned by frequent alarms false or real—the incessant sounds of the enemy firing upon the

British advanced piquets—and, lastly, the dismal howling of packs of wolves, while employed in their occupation of scenting and scratching up the dead, produced a state of discomfort and gloom of which it would be difficult to present an exaggerated picture. "I do not believe," Oct. 7. writes Burgoyne, "either officer or soldier ever slept during that interval, without his clothes." *

In the mean time, the only occasion, on which Burgoyne had ventured to strike a blow from his entrenchments, had proved a disaster. A detachment of about fifteen hundred men, whom he deployed, in the vain hope of dislodging the enemy from their commanding position, and of thus extricating him and his army from their toils, were not only forced back to their lines, but a gallant band of Americans, led by the famous Benedict Arnold, brilliantly forced their way into the British works. The British quarter, it is true, was heroically and successfully defended, but unhappily the German entrenchments were carried. Every endeavour was made by Burgoyne to bring on a general engagement, but as the grand object of the Americans was evidently to compel a British army to surrender at discretion, it was an issue which they very naturally declined. Thus, then, with starvation staring his followers in the face, in the hourly dread of being surrounded by overpowering numbers, and with his communications with Canada being gradually cut off, no alternative was left to him but either unconditional surrender, or else a last desperate effort to fight his way back to British America.

The last alternative befitted Burgoyne the best; and accordingly, having collected the remains of his disheartened army, he led them forth on a dismal rainy night on their return to Ticonderoga. Miserable as was that memorable

* Review of the Evidence, &c., p. 166; Stedman's Hist. of the American War, vol. i. p. 344.

retreat, far worse were the calamities that awaited them on reaching their destination. "Such was their state of fatigue," writes Burgoyne, "that the men for the most part had not the strength or inclination to cut wood and make fires, but rather sought sleep in their wet clothes upon the wet ground under the continuing rain."* Unquestionably the person most to be commiserated was Burgoyne himself. To his consternation he found himself hemmed in on every side. In whatever direction he looked, his eye encountered the bristling of the enemy's bayonets, and their cannon pointed towards his camp. No tidings reached him from Sir Henry Clinton. His tents and baggage had been either captured or destroyed. His provisions were almost exhausted. In his misery he summoned a council of war; but then arose the humiliating question, in what corner they could assemble without being exposed to the cannon and rifles of the enemy. They met, however; when briefly and mournfully Burgoyne explained his position and craved their advice. He was unwilling, he said, to be left with the sole charge of the national honour. For himself, he saw no alternative but to surrender to the enemy on the most honourable terms they could obtain; but should others have better advice to offer, he was ready to afford them all the support in his power. No one, however, was prepared with a remedy, and consequently surrender was unanimously agreed upon. It may be mentioned that, while they were deliberating, an eighteen-pound ball passed by the table at which they were seated.†

The concluding details of this disastrous episode in the annals of British chivalry may be briefly related. On the 14th of October a flag of truce was to be seen proceeding from the royal camp to the head-quarters of General Gates, bearing with it the terms on which the British forces pro-

* Review of the Evidence, &c., p. 174.

† Gordon's Hist. of the American Revolution, vol. ii. p. 572.

posed to deliver themselves up as prisoners of war. The reply of the American general proved to be a most disheartening one. The British army, he said, was in an utterly defenceless state; its retreat was cut off; its camp invested; and under these circumstances, not only must it surrender at discretion, but the officers and men must submit to lay down their arms within their lines. With this last humiliating requisition the British Officers unanimously and indignantly refused to comply. "Sooner," they wrote back to Gates, "than this army will consent to ground their arms in their encampment, they will rush on the enemy, determined to take no quarter."

Subsequently, Gates not only lowered his demands, but behaved towards his fallen enemies with a generosity and delicacy which did him the highest credit. By the terms
Oct. 16. of surrender it was agreed that the British should march out of their encampment attended by all the honours of war; that the word of command to pile their arms should be given by their own officers; that the officers should be allowed to retain their side-arms, and on no account be separated from their men. Furthermore, Gates, to prevent his men triumphing over the spectacle of a British army delivering up its arms, issued an order that on their day of humiliation, no American soldier should quit the camp. Such an injunction, however, would scarcely seem to have been necessary. Instead of the American army betraying any exultation, we find them generously sympathising with the wounded feelings of their foes. When the British, after having piled their arms, marched past the American army, not a cheer was heard in their ranks. Not a countenance wore a look of satisfaction. According to an English officer who was present—"All was mute astonishment and pity."*

* Lieutenant Anburey's Travels in North America; quoted in Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. vi. p. 284.

In justice to the memory of Burgoyne and of his gallant followers, it is but fair to observe that the force to which they were compelled to submit far outnumbered their own. Adopting the American returns, the British force which surrendered at Saratoga amounted only to 5,752 men, of whom 3,500 were trained soldiers; the remainder being camp-followers. On the other hand, according to a return signed by Gates on the day previous to the convention, the victorious army consisted of no fewer than 13,216 men, in addition to 3,875 men who had been sent forward in detachments with the object of cutting off the retreat of the British between Saratoga and Ticonderoga. According to Gibbon the historian, the latter, at the time of their surrender, had been "three days without eating." *

It was a remarkable party, composed of defeated, as well as of victorious General Officers, who, on the evening of the surrender of the British army at Saratoga, assembled at General Gates's hospitable dinner-table. Gates was not only himself an Englishman by birth, but in a letter, written only a few days after his great success, to the Earl of Thanet, we find him styling himself one "who glories in the name." When therefore he greeted Burgoyne with the somewhat equivocally worded salutation—"I am very happy to see you"—it is impossible to believe, as has been sometimes supposed, that the words were intended to be the vehicle of either insult or wit. "I believe it;" was Burgoyne's reply; "the fortune of war is entirely yours." † Another eminent American officer, to whom, on this trying occasion, Burgoyne was introduced, was General Philip Schuyler, one of those innate gentlemen, and, at the same time, enterprising soldiers, whom, at this crisis

* Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works, p. 290. Edition, 1837.

† Voyages du Marquis de Chastellux, quoted in Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. vi. p. 284, *note*.

[illegible] America it was her good fortune to [illegible] that had happened that Burgoyne, [illegible] disastrous campaign, had felt himself [illegible] necessity to burn down, not only [illegible] summer residence of General Schuyler, but [illegible] saw-houses; thus occasioning him a [illegible] of which it is said to be thousand pounds. Yet [illegible] General Gates's table, the [illegible] displeasure, or even [illegible] which had occurred at once placed him, by [illegible] good-humour with which he accepted [illegible] at his ease. "I expressed [illegible] regret at the event which [illegible] and the reasons which had occasioned it. [illegible] to think no more of it, saying that the [illegible] according to the principles and rules of [illegible] that he should have done the same upon the [illegible] to that effect. He did more, he [illegible] me to Albany, in order, [illegible] better quarters than a [illegible] find. This gentleman con- [illegible] house, and, to my great [illegible] Schuyler and her family; [illegible] during my whole [illegible] covers for [illegible] demonstration [illegible]."*

[illegible] a letter to his wife, written from [illegible] after Burgoyne's surrender, makes some [illegible] concerning himself and his prisoners. "I got here," [illegible] "the night before last, and the army are now [illegible] the heights to the southward of this city.

* [illegible] Speech in the House of Commons May 26, 1788; Parl. [illegible] See also Williams's Last Journals, vol. ii. pp. 175, 273,

Major-General Phillips—who wrote me that saucy note, last year, from St. John's—is now my prisoner, with Lord Petersham,* Major Acland—son of Sir Thomas—and his lady, daughter of Lord Ilchester†—sister to the famous Lady Susan—and about a dozen Members of Parliament, Scotch Lords, &c."—"I hope Lady Harriet Acland will be here when you arrive. She is the most amiable, delicate little piece of quality you ever beheld. Her husband is one of the prettiest fellows I have seen; learned, sensible, and an Englishman to all intents and purposes; has been a most confounded Tory, but I hope to make him as good a Whig as myself before we separate." ‡

When, on the 20th of November, the British Parliament re-assembled, the dismal tidings of Burgoyne's surrender were yet on their way across the Atlantic. Rumours, indeed, of some serious disaster having befallen the army of Canada had for some time been current, but the terrible truth had yet to be revealed. Those rumours, however, vague as they were, had gone far to stir up an aversion to the war. For some time past, more enlightened persons had begun to ask themselves whether the war was in reality a righteous one. Every one had arrived at the conviction that it was becoming a very expensive war. From the King downwards, almost every one was agreed in wishing it at an end. Even the country gentlemen, whose rounds of applause had hounded on Charles Townshend in the days of his fatal financial triumphs, began to question the wisdom of their former enthusiasm, and to doubt whether an acquiescence in a moderate land-tax would not have been

* Charles, afterwards third Earl of Harrington and a General in the Army.

† Lady Christiana Caroline Henrietta Strangways, born January 3, 1750, married in 1771, Major John Dyke Acland, eldest son of Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, Bart., of Killerton House, Devonshire. An interesting account of the hardships and trials which Lady Henrietta endured in following a sick and wounded husband through the Canadian campaign, will be found in Debrett's Baronetage, *Art.* Acland. Respecting her "famous" sister, Lady Susan Strangways, see *ante*, vol. i. p. 66, and note.

‡ Moore's Diary of the American Revolution, vol. i. pp. 511, 512.

of the destinies of America, it was her good fortune to number among her sons. It had happened that Burgoyne, in the course of his disastrous campaign, had felt himself constrained by military necessity to burn down, not only the favourite summer residence of General Schuyler, but also his valuable store-houses; thus occasioning him a loss amounting, it is said, to ten thousand pounds. Yet when they subsequently met at General Gates's table, the American, instead of displaying any displeasure, or even concern, for what had occurred, at once placed him, by the high-bred good-humour with which he accepted Burgoyne's apologies, completely at his ease. "I expressed to him," said Burgoyne, "my regret at the event which had happened, and the reasons which had occasioned it. He desired me to think no more of it, saying that the occasion justified it, according to the principles and rules of war, and that he should have done the same upon the same occasion, or words to that effect. He did more, he sent an aide-de-camp to conduct me to Albany, in order, as he expressed it, to procure me better quarters than a stranger might be able to find. This gentleman conducted me to a very elegant house, and, to my great surprise, presented me to Mrs. Schuyler and her family; and in this General's house I remained during my whole stay at Albany, with a table of more than twenty covers for me and my friends, and every other possible demonstration of hospitality."*

General Gates, in a letter to his wife, written from Albany three days after Burgoyne's surrender, makes some rather interesting allusions to his prisoners. "I got here," he writes, "the night before last, and the army are now encamped upon the heights to the southward of this city.

* General Burgoyne's Speech in the House of Commons May 26, 1788; Parl. Hist., vol. xix. col. 1182. See also Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. pp. 175, 273, 274.

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‡ Moore's Diary of the American Revolution, vol. i. pp. 511, 512.

less expensive in the end, than voting millions for the purpose of bayonetting their fellow-countrymen. The worst of it was, however, that although every one was desirous of peace, every one was no less resolved to maintain the Colonies in their dependence, while, on the other hand, the Colonies were equally determined not to treat except in their new capacity as an Independent people. "I tell this House and this Govern-
Dec. 2. ment," was again the prophetic language of Governor Pownall in the Commons, "that the Americans never will return to their subjection to this country." The sovereignty, he said, of Great Britain over America was abolished and gone for ever. "Until you shall be convinced," he added, "that you are no longer sovereigns over America, but that the United States are an independent sovereign people — until you are prepared to treat with them as such—it is of no consequence at all what schemes or plans of conciliation this side of the House or that may suggest." *

At this time, the hopes of the nation were fixed almost exclusively upon the illustrious and venerable Chatham. He alone, it was felt, could cope with the present extraordinary emergency. By means of the great popularity of his name on the other side of the Atlantic; by means of his genius, his eloquence, and his patriotism, it was considered that the further shedding of blood might yet be stayed, and the dismemberment of the Empire prevented. Accordingly, as the day appointed for the reassembling of Parliament drew near, there prevailed the deepest anxiety to listen once more to his unrivalled eloquence, and to learn the nature of the remedial policy which it was known to be his intention to propose in Parliament. When that day arrived, the royal Speech

* Parl. Hist., vol. xix. cols. 526, 527.

proved to be more ill-advised, if possible, than had been the case on former similar occasions. Notoriously threatening as was the cloud which hung over the national horizon, the miserable war, which was raging on the other side of the Atlantic, was not only spoken of without despondence, but in language of presumptuous confidence. The brave and enlightened countrymen of Washington and Franklin were still denounced as a "deluded and unhappy multitude," while the noble spirit which animated them, was characterized as the "obstinacy of rebels."* No language could be better calculated to inflame to its highest pitch the indignation of Chatham; and accordingly, when he rose from his seat, to move an amendment to the Address, it was with flashing eyes, and with looks of inexpressible scorn. "As to conquest, my Lords," he said, "it is impossible! You may swell every expense and every effort, still more extravagantly; pile and accumulate every assistance you can buy or borrow; traffic and barter with every little pitiful German Prince that sells and sends his subjects to the shambles of a foreign Prince; but your efforts are for ever vain and impotent; doubly so from this mercenary aid on which you rely, for it irritates, to an incurable resentment, the minds of your enemies. To overrun them with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder; devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty! If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms—never—never—never!†

"But, my Lords, who is the man that—in addition to these disgraces and mischiefs of our army—has dared to authorize and associate to our arms the tomahawk and scalping-knife of the savage? To call into civilized alliance

* Parl. Hist., vol. xix. col. 354, 355. † *Ibid.*, col. 363.

the wild and inhuman savage of the woods; to delegate to the merciless Indian the defence of disputed rights, and to wage the horrors of his barbarous war against our brethren! My Lords, these enormities call aloud for redress and punishment. Unless thoroughly done away, it will be a stain on the national character. It is a violation of the Constitution. I believe it is against law." *

It was in replying to this spirited denunciation that one of the Ministers, the Earl of Suffolk, laid himself open to especial animadversion. He was justified, indeed, in arguing, that unless Great Britain had turned the tomahawks of the Indians against the Americans, the Americans would have turned the tomahawks against Great Britain. Lord Suffolk, however, took his stand on less defensible grounds. In a contest with rebels, he said, there were no means which God and Nature might have placed at the disposal of the governing powers, to which they would not be justified in having recourse.† If anything was wanting to fill the phial of Lord Chatham's wrath, it was the expression of this unholy sentiment. "He started up," writes the Duke of Grafton who was present, "with a degree of indignation that added to the force of the sudden and unexampled burst of eloquence which must have affected any audience, and which seemed to me to surpass all that we have ever heard of the celebrated orators of Greece and Rome." ‡—"My Lords," exclaimed the great orator, "I am astonished—shocked—to hear such sentiments confessed, to hear them avowed in this House, or in this country; principles equally unconstitutional, inhuman, and unchristian. My Lords, I did not intend to have encroached again upon your attention; but I cannot repress my indignation. I feel myself impelled by every duty. We are called upon, as members

* Parl. Hist., vol. xix. col. 364. † *Ibid.*, cols. 368, 387.

‡ Duke of Grafton's MS. Memoirs, quoted in Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. i. p. xviii. Appendix.

of this House, as men, as Christian men, to protest against such notions, standing near the throne, polluting the ear of Majesty.—'That God and Nature have put into our hands!'—I know not what ideas that lord may entertain of God and Nature, but I know that such abominable principles are equally abhorrent to religion and humanity. What! to attribute the sacred sanction of God and Nature to the massacres of the Indian scalping-knife, to the cannibal-savage, torturing, murdering, roasting, and eating—literally, my Lords, eating—the mangled victims of his barbarous battles. Such horrible notions shock every precept of religion, divine or natural, and every generous feeling of humanity. They shock every sentiment of honour. They shock me as a lover of honourable war, and a detester of murderous barbarity. These abominable principles, and this more abominable avowal of them, demand the most decisive indignation. I call upon that Right Reverend Bench, those holy ministers of the Gospel, and pious pastors of our Church! I conjure them to join in the holy work, and vindicate the religion of their God! I appeal to the wisdom and the law of this Learned Bench to defend and support the justice of their country. I call upon the Bishops to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their lawn; upon the learned Judges to interpose the purity of their ermine, to save us from this pollution. I call upon the honour of your Lordships to reverence the dignity of your ancestors, and to maintain your own. I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country to vindicate the national character. I invoke the genius of the Constitution. From the tapestry that adorns these walls the immortal ancestor of this noble lord * frowns with indignation at the

* Lord Suffolk was descended from Thomas, first Earl of Suffolk, who highly distinguished himself in the command of a ship in the memorable engagement with the Spanish Armada. Lord Chatham, however, probably more particularly adverted to the Lord High Admiral, Lord Howard of Effingham, who knighted his kinsman at

disgrace of his country. In vain he led your victorious fleet against the boasted Armada of Spain; in vain he defended and established the honour, the liberties, the religion, the Protestant religion, of this country, against the arbitrary cruelties of Popery and the Inquisition, if these more than Popish cruelties and Inquisitorial practices are let loose among us. To turn forth into our settlements, among our ancient connexions, friends, and relations, the merciless cannibal thirsting for the blood of man, woman, and child! To send forth the infidel savage—against whom?—Against your Protestant brethren, to lay waste their country, to desolate their dwellings, and extirpate their race and name with those horrible hell-hounds of savage war—hell-hounds, I say, of savage war!" *

The measures, proposed by Lord Chatham and embodied by him in his amendment to the Address, were the putting an immediate stop to hostilities in America, to be followed up by a Treaty of peace and amity, which should secure for the Americans the full and permanent enjoyment of their ancient rights, liberties, and charters, and, at the same time, provide for the future strength, happiness, and prosperity of the united empire. Lord Chatham's conciliatory project, whether likely to be acceptable to the American people or not, was, as usual, swamped by the votes of the high-prerogative party.

It was on the third of December, thirteen days after the meeting of Parliament, that the astounding news of Burgoyne's disaster at Saratoga was first communicated to the House of Commons. Distressing rumours, said Colonel Barré—addressing himself to the American Secretary of State, Lord George Germaine—were rife in the metropolis, of a

sea for the good service he had rendered in the action. The tapestry-hanging, representing the defeat of the Armada, which adorned the old House of Lords, was destroyed by the great fire at Westminster, in 1834.

* Parl. Hist., vol. xix. cols. 368—370.

great disaster having befallen the fine army which had recently quitted the British shores, and he appealed therefore to the noble Lord to inform the House, on his honour, whether such rumours had any valid foundation. When Lord George rose to reply, it was with evident reluctance, and with looks expressive of the worst that could have happened. Government, he said, had as yet received no authentic intelligence on the subject, but, from expresses which had reached him from Quebec, he feared that the reports were only too correct. His words fell like a thunderclap upon the House. Nothing could be more manifest than that an awful and humiliating catastrophe had befallen the country — that a British army had struck its colours at the beck of an undisciplined Colonial militia—that the same men, whom Parliament had been in the habit of sneering at as a cowardly disorganized rabble, had trampled under foot the ancient military glory of Great Britain. A pause—an almost awful silence—followed Lord George's resumption of his seat. No sooner, however, had astonishment had time to yield to indignation, than, from the lips of Fox, Barré, and Burke successively, there was hurled at Ministers such a storm of invective and sarcasm, that even the boldest and most hardened placemen quailed beneath its vehemence. Lord North, usually so self-possessed if not apathetic, was so affected as to shed tears.*

In the House of Lords, although the announcement of Burgoyne's surrender provoked a less tempestuous debate, the policy of Ministers was not the less indignantly impugned. When, two days afterwards, Chatham again arose to address the House on the subject, his figure might have formed an admirable study for the painter or the sculptor. He had in his hand, he said, the last Speech from the Throne. He had in his heart a deep sense

* Belsham's Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. ii. p. 274.

of the great calamity that had overtaken his country. The Speech, he insisted, was specious and unfaithful. There was not a noble lord in Administration who dare rise and attempt to controvert his assertion. Ministers had imposed upon the people, and Parliament had been deluded into sanctioning the imposition. They had held out "false lights" to the country gentlemen; seducing them to support a destructive war under the impression that a diminution of the land-tax would be the consequence of drawing a revenue from the Colonies. The project of penetrating into the American States by way of Canada was not only a most wild, uncombined, and mad one, but it had been carried out in a manner the most bloody, barbarous, and ferocious, of any recorded in history. The arms of Great Britain had been tarnished by blending the scalping-knife and the tomahawk with the sword and the firelock. It was a stigma which not all the waters of the Hudson nor of the Delaware could wash away. "Ministers," exclaimed the venerable Earl, "had insidiously betrayed their country into a war with America. And what had been the fruits?—Let the sad catastrophe, which had befallen Burgoyne, speak!" *

The individual, on whose head the denunciations of Chatham, on this occasion, fell the heaviest, was Dr. Markham Archbishop of York, whose recent delivery of high Tory tirades in the pulpit, as well as in the House of Lords, had occasioned great disgust to the liberal party. The doctrines of the Right Reverend Prelate, said the indignant orator, were those of Atterbury and Sacheverell. As a Whig, he not only abjured and detested such doctrines, but he hoped to see the day when they would be punishable as libels. This castigation seems to have rankled deep in the mind of the Archbishop. When, five months afterwards,

* Parl. Hist., vol. xix. cols. 486–491.

death closed the eyes of the most illustrious Englishman of his age, and when his countrymen were vying which should most do honour to his memory, the Archbishop was one of four peers who entered a protest on the Journals of the House of Lords, against settling a revenue on the Earldom of Chatham. *

Among those who deeply loved their country, and who therefore were the most sensibly afflicted by the tidings of Burgoyne's surrender, was unquestionably the King. According to Walpole, when the news was communicated to him he "fell into agonies." At his levee, indeed, on the following day, his manner not only betrayed no sign of dejection, but, if Walpole is to be credited—"to disguise his concern he affected to laugh and to be so indecently merry, that Lord North endeavoured to stop him." † This, however, like almost every other statement of that prejudiced writer, when he has occasion to canvass the character or conduct of George the Third, should be received with proper caution. The King's long and natural reluctance to recognise as a sister-in-law Walpole's fortunate niece, the milliner's illegitimate daughter, never failed to rankle in the heart of the offended wit. "I have not," writes the late King of Hanover, "yet read those letters you refer to of Horace Walpole, but I can believe anything of his animosity and personal dislike to the late King." ‡

In the mean time, a war with France, which Lord Chatham and others had more than once predicted would be the consequence of protracting the contest in America, was evidently on the eve of being forced upon Great Britain. France, intent on procuring the ruin and humiliation of England, and turning them to her own advantage, had

* Parl. Hist., vol. xix. cols. 491, 1255.

† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 170.

‡ MS. Letter to the late Mr. Croker. The letters, referred to by the King of Hanover, were evidently Walpole's Letters to Sir Horace Mann, published in 1843—4.

for some time past made no secret of her attachment to the Insurgent cause, and of the satisfaction with which she beheld her ancient enemy exhausting her resources and ruining her commerce, in the mad pursuit after an unattainable object. From a very early period of the struggles across the Atlantic, that "insidious nation"—as George the Third designates France in one of his letters to Lord North*—had surreptitiously supplied the Americans with arms and other military stores. Silas Deane, of Connecticut—when despatched to Paris "to obtain and cultivate" the friendship of France—had been as honourably received in that country as if he had been the Minister of a great and independent Power. Franklin, when subsequently associated with him in the mission, was received with even greater distinction. The "poor printer's boy," whom the great lords had formerly laughed to scorn in the Council Chamber at Whitehall, was now courted and caressed at the haughtiest Court, and in the most brilliant saloons of any capital in Europe.

At length, the contents of the despatches, received by Ministers from the British Ambassador at Paris, Lord Stormont, left little doubt on their minds of the hostile intentions of the Court of Versailles. France and
Dec. 28. Spain, wrote his lordship, were evidently plotting together the "execution of some insidious design." Their object, as he pointed out, was manifestly to encourage the Americans to continue their resistance till the resources of Great Britain should be almost exhausted, and then suddenly and unexpectedly to inflict upon her an irreparable blow. Already the naval force of France was amply sufficient for all the purposes of defence; yet, writes Stormont, "they are continually encreasing it." † As for the abstract cause

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 105.
† Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. vi. p. xxi. Appendix.

of quarrel between Great Britain and her Colonies, the French Court probably took as little interest in it, as in the last disputes between the Cherokee and the Chickasaw Indians. All that the French Ministers cared for, was the aggrandizement of France, the degradation of England, and a favourable commercial treaty with America. Great Britain, they argued, must, in consequence of the ruinous amount of men and military stores which she was constantly transporting across the Atlantic, have nearly arrived at the end of her means. The Americans, on the other hand, had shown themselves not only able to raise, and to maintain, armies of their own in the field, but capable of resisting the disciplined troops of Europe. Moreover already, despite the fleets of Great Britain, American privateers were the terror of the ocean. Let America, then, was the proposition of the French Ministers, achieve but one signal military success upon her own soil, and France would not only feel justified in acknowledging her Independence, but would at once proclaim herself her friend and ally. Then, said they, will the glorious day have dawned, when France will force her immemorial foe to yield to her the empire of the seas, and to drain to its dregs the cup of national despondency.

That, under these circumstances, France should have exulted over the great disaster which had befallen the British arms at Saratoga, was nothing more than was to be expected. In the opinion of the French Minister of Marine, M. de Sartine, whose views were subsequently embraced by the Count de Maurepas and the Count de Vergennes, the time had at length arrived when it became the policy of France to throw down the gauntlet to Great Britain, by openly avowing herself the champion and ally of the revolted Colonists of America. Accordingly, about the middle of December, not only was the heart of Franklin rejoiced by the intimation that his Most Christian Majesty was prepared to recognise the Independence of his country,

but, on the 6th of February, 1778, were signed at Paris those famous treaties of Commerce and Alliance, which, more than any other political covenant of modern times, were destined to affect the fortunes of the human race.

It was very shortly before this time, that the King is said to have privately despatched to Paris James Hutton the Moravian—"the old deaf Moravian," as we find George Steevens styling him—in the last faint hope of his being able to negotiate terms of amity with Franklin. As Hutton appears to have been a favourite with his Sovereign, and as he was certainly admitted by him to frequent personal interviews, the presumption that he was so employed by the King is rendered far from unreasonable. That his mission was a fruitless one it is needless to add. "Hutton," writes Walpole, "with tears flung himself on Franklin's neck, and beseeched him to give both countries peace. The politic philosopher replied coolly—yet certainly not without feeling the triumphant dignity of having humbled a haughty monarch—'It was too late.' *It was.*" *

* To David Hartley, Franklin writes from Passy, on the 12th of February 1778; —"An old friend of mine, Mr. Hutton a chief of the Moravians, who is often at the Queen's Palace, and is sometimes spoken to by the King, was over here lately. He pretended to no commission, but urged me much to propose some terms of peace, which I avoided. He has written to me since his return, pressing the same thing, and expressing with some confidence his opinion that we might have everything short of Independence, &c. Enclosed I send my answers open that you may read them, and, if you please, copy before you deliver them. They will serve to show you more fully my sentiments, though they serve no other purpose." Memoirs of James Hutton by Daniel Benham, London, 1856, p. 513. See also p. 498 and *note*, and pp. 499, 507—519 of Benham's Memoirs of Hutton; Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 204, and *note* by Dr. Doran; and Nichols's Literary Anecdotes of the 18th Century, vol. iii. p. 437.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Debates in Parliament on the American Question—Strong feeling in favour of conceding American Independence—Conciliatory Measures passed by Parliament on the motion of the Premier, Lord North—Treaty of Commerce between France and the revolted Colonists—Consequent Rupture with France—General Demand for the appointment of Lord Chatham as Premier—Strong aversion of the King to this measure—The King's former kindness ill-repaid by Lord Chatham—Refusal of Office by Lord Chatham—His last Speech—His death—Interment of Lord Chatham in Westminster Abbey.

THE British Parliament no sooner re-assembled after the Christmas recess, than the policy of Ministers in regard to America was, as usual, fiercely attacked in both Houses. Unfortunately, the question involved a point on which the leaders of the Opposition were divided among themselves. It was argued, on the one hand, by Lord Rockingham and the Duke of Richmond that the return of the Colonies to their allegiance was an impossible event, and therefore that it was alike the duty and the policy of Great Britain at once to acknowledge the Independence of America, and, at the same time, to acknowledge it with as good a grace as possible. "I conceive," writes Lord Rockingham to Lord Chatham, "that America will never again assent to this country's having actual power within that continent. I cannot, therefore, so far betray my trust to the public, as to act as if that was practicable which I thought otherwise." * On the other hand, Lord Chatham and Lord Shelburne were con- 1778. Jan. 20.

* January 26, 1778; Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. p. 491. See also Lord Chatham's Letter to the Duke of Richmond, April 6, 1778, perhaps the last letter which the great statesman ever wrote. *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 518.

vinced that a separation between Great Britain and her Colonies would involve the ruin of the empire, and accordingly were prepared to uphold the sovereignty of the mother-country, almost at any sacrifice.

That many wise and far-sighted persons were beginning to adopt the views of Lord Rockingham and his party, there can be no question. Even Lord Shelburne was compelled to admit that such was the case. To Lord Chatham he writes on the 23rd of December 1777—"I am entirely of your Lordship's opinion as to not subscribing to the independence of the Colonies;" "but," he adds, "your Lordship may be assured a different opinion gains ground every day, and it fills me with astonishment to meet with persons, totally unconnected with each other, daily coming over to the acknowledgment of their independence." * The view taken by Lords Chatham and Shelburne was certainly an unfortunate one. For instance, had a friendly separation taken place at this time between the two countries, it would have been attended with scarcely half the humiliation which subsequently tarnished the concession by Great Britain of American Independence. It would have put an end, at once, to a costly and sanguinary struggle. It would have prevented much of that vindictive feeling, and many of those heart-sores which were the consequences of continuing that struggle; and lastly, by precluding the need of America throwing herself into the arms of France, the impending war with the House of Bourbon would in all probability have been warded off.† "Born and educated in England," writes General Gates to his former friend, the Earl of Thanet, "I cannot help feeling for the misfortunes brought upon my native country by

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. pp. 480, 484.

† "Every letter from France adds to the probability of a speedy declaration of war;" The King to Lord North, 31 January 1778; *Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England*, vol. vi. p. xxxiv. Appendix.

the wickedness of that Administration, who began, and have continued, this most unjust, impolitic, cruel, and unnatural war." The Americans are described by Gates as resolved to surrender their new Independence only with their lives. "The United States of America," he writes, "are willing to be the friends, but never will submit to be the slaves, of the parent-country. They are, by consanguinity, by language, and by the affection which naturally springs from these,* more attached to England than any other country under the sun. Therefore, spurn not the blessing which yet remains. Instantly withdraw your fleets and armies. Cultivate the friendship and commerce of America. Thus, and thus only, can England hope to be great and happy. Seek it in a commercial alliance. Seek it, ere it be too late, for there only you must expect to find it. These, my Lord, are the undisguised sentiments of a man that rejoices not in the blood shed in this fatal contest; of a man who glories in the name of an Englishman, and wishes to see peace and friendship between Great Britain and America fixed upon the firmest foundation."† This remarkable letter was placed by Lord Thanet in the hands of Lord Rockingham, and was apparently shown by him to Lord Chatham. If such, however, was the case, it was to little purpose. So bent, indeed, was the great Earl on humbling, once more, the pride of the House of Bourbon, so convinced was he that the debasement and fall of Great Britain must inevitably be the consequence of American Independence, as apparently to be insensible to all argument and reason. Thus was the Opposition deprived of the great advantage of having a common leader. There were two points, however, on which they were entirely agreed—on the

* *Sic. orig.*

† Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. pp. 489—90, *note*. The letter, which is dated October 26, 1777, was subsequently, (February 26, 1778,) read by Lord Rockingham in the House of Lords. *Parl. Hist.*, vol. xix. col. 731.

incompetency of the present Ministers, and on the necessity of turning them out of Office as speedily as possible.

There was, at this period, perhaps no person in England who more anxiously longed for peace with the Colonies, than the Prime Minister, Lord North. Long since tired of the worry, the fatigues, and the responsibilities of office, the great object of his heart had been to bring the dispute with America to an honourable termination, and, having accomplished this philanthropic purpose, to be allowed to retire into private life with the consolatory reflection that he had done his utmost to serve his King and country. Accordingly, it was with this object that, on the 17th of February, he rose from his seat in Parliament, and, in a lucid and eloquent speech, expounded to an astonished House of Commons, the measures by which he imagined conciliation might be effected. Unfortunately for the credit of Ministers, those measures proved to be almost precisely the same as had been formerly advocated by the Duke of Grafton, and which had then been scouted by Lord North and his party, as undignified and impracticable. The main points, in the Prime Minister's plan, consisted of a proposal to guarantee to America an exemption from all forced taxation for the future, and, at the same time, to nominate five Commissioners, who were to proceed to America, and to treat directly with Congress. These Commissioners were to be empowered to declare a cessation of hostilities; to grant pardons; to promise the repeal of the several offensive Acts of Parliament of which the Colonists complained; in fact to agree to any terms with the Americans, short of an acknowledgment of their Independence.

The delivery of this celebrated exposition naturally excited an extraordinary sensation, both in and out of the House of Commons. It was only too manifestly a recantation, on the part of Ministers, of their former errors; an admission that their past policy had been a blunder. No less clear it was

that the measures now proposed were the result, not of conviction, but of necessity and fear. Lamentable, indeed, is the consideration how large an amount of bloodshed and humiliation might have been avoided, had those measures been earlier adopted. Shame was depicted on the countenances of the Ministerial party, as they listened to the language of their leader. To no party, indeed, did Lord North's scheme give satisfaction. The friends of High-Prerogative were incensed at the idea of treating with men whom they regarded as insolent rebels, while the Opposition were not less indignant at the appropriation of their policy by Ministers, a proceeding by which they were robbed of their stoutest weapon of attack. It was impossible for them, however, without displaying a very factious spirit, to dissent from measures of which they had been the ardent advocates, and consequently Lord North experienced but little difficulty in carrying his Resolutions into law.

It was two days after the King had given his assent to Lord North's measures, that the French ambassador, the Marquis de Noailles, placed in the hands of Lord Weymouth as insulting and offensive a note, as ever was received by a British Secretary of State. The United States, it intimated, "*being in full possession of their Independence*," his most Christian Majesty had thought proper to negotiate with them a treaty of commerce and peace, which had already been duly signed by their respective plenipotentiaries. On the 17th of March, copies of this note were simultaneously laid by Lord Weymouth before the House of Lords, and by Lord North before the House of Commons. A royal message was at the same time delivered to both Houses, in which his Majesty, after having intimated to them that the British Ambassador had received instructions to quit Paris, expressed his confidence that the zealous and affectionate spirit of his people would furnish him with the means of repelling insult, and of upholding the national honour. Loyal

addresses to the King were carried in both Houses by large majorities.

It was at this threatening crisis, that the country, more and more, centred its hopes in Lord Chatham. It was remembered how, in former days of great national peril and humiliation, he had proved the saviour of his country; how marvellously he had restored the commerce and reputation of Great Britain; how gloriously he had upheld her honour; how completely he had humbled the House of Bourbon. His name, it was argued, was still held in awe by the nations of Europe, and across the Atlantic was still a loved and an honoured one. His eloquence was still as sublime, and his mind, to all appearance, as vigorous, and as fertile of expedients as ever. Accordingly, from all quarters and by men of all political views and factions, a cry was raised for the elevation of the venerable Earl to the premiership. The ship was in peril, said Lord Mansfield, with tears in his eyes, to Lord Holderness, and, unless the King sent for Lord Chatham, it would assuredly sink.* General Gates, in his letter to Lord Thanet, speaks of him as the "great state-physician" whose skill alone could cure the maladies of England and America.† Lord Bute, in his solitude at Luton, named him as apparently the only statesman capable of weathering the storm.‡ Lord North himself not only urged the King to send for his rival, but to send for him without delay, and, lastly the younger George Grenville§ eloquently
Feb. 11. pointed to Chatham in the House of Commons, as the only individual fit to grapple with the great emergency of the hour. "If there be a man," he exclaimed, "who has served this nation with honour to himself and glory to his country; if there be a man who has carried the arms of Britain

* Earl Temple to Lady Chatham; *Chatham Corresp.*, vol. iv. p. 493.

† Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. p. 489, *note*.

‡ Almon's Anecdotes of the Earl of Chatham, vol. iii. p. 291.

§ Afterwards Earl Temple and Marquis of Buckingham.

triumphant to every quarter of the globe beyond the most sanguine expectations of the people; if there be a man of whom the House of Bourbon stands more particularly in awe; if there be a man, in this country, who unites the confidence of England and America, is not he the proper person to treat with Americans, and not those who have uniformly deceived and oppressed them? There is not one present who is ignorant of the person to whom I allude. You all know I mean a noble and near relation, Lord Chatham." *

Earnestly and loudly, however, as the country called for the services of Lord Chatham, it was a demand which the King was determined upon resisting to the last. Not that, on the all-important subject of America, there existed, at this time, any material difference between his views and those of the Earl. The King had assented to every conciliatory measure advocated by the latter. They were mutually anxious to prevent the further effusion of blood, and lastly, and unhappily, they were severally of opinion that the ruin of Great Britain must be the necessary consequence of American Independence. Even on a most critical point which was subsequently urged by the Opposition, the immediate recall of the British army from America —the King would apparently not have been found unreasonable. Referring to the approaching war with France, we find him writing to Lord North—"Should that happen, it might be wise to withdraw the troops from the revolted Provinces, and having strengthened Canada, &c., to make war on the French and Spanish Islands. Success in that object will repay our exertions." † It is to other causes then—to the existence of personal dislike on the part of the King, and of waywardness and arrogance on the part

Jan. 31.

* Parl. Hist., vol. xix. col. 723.

† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 104. Edition, 1858.

of the spoiled Earl, that we are to attribute the King's persistent refusals to place at the head of his councils the most imperious of his subjects. It was only in the province of a Dictator, as the King well knew, that Lord Chatham would accept office, and as a Dictator the King was resolved not to admit him into the royal closet. He had no wish, indeed, in a season of great emergency, to deprive either himself or his subjects, of the benefit of Lord Chatham's wisdom and experience, and accordingly he had authorized overtures being privately made to the Earl offering him high office, but only on the condition of his joining and strengthening the present Administration. To acquiesce in accepting as his tyrant and master the man whom, to use his own expressive phrase, he regarded as "a trumpet of sedition" and to whose eloquent exhortations and advice, in and out of Parliament, he mainly and not unreasonably attributed the revolt of the Americans against his crown—to deliver himself up, bound hand and foot, to the individual who had so recently, and in so pointed a manner, marked his disapproval of his Sovereign's conduct as to withdraw his son, Lord Pitt, from his military service*—to give his confidence to one whose

* John, Viscount Pitt, afterwards second Earl of Chatham, entered the Army as Ensign of the 47th Regiment, March 14, 1774, and resigned his commission as such March 12, 1776, at which time he was serving as aide-de-camp to Major General Carleton in Canada. "You will tell yourself," writes Lady Chatham to General Carleton, February 14, 1776, "with what concern he [Lord Chatham] communicates to you a step, that, from his fixed opinion with regard to the continuance of the unhappy war with our fellow-subjects of America, he has found it necessary to take. It is that of withdrawing his son from such a service." *Chatham Corresp.*, vol. iv. p. 420. "If"—run the instructions from Congress to Colonel Arnold, dated September 14, 1775—"Lord Chatham's son should be in Canada, and in any way should fall in your power, you are enjoined to treat him with all possible deference and respect. You cannot err in paying too much honour to the son of so illustrious a character and so true a friend to America." *Washington's Writings, by Sparks*, vol. iii. pp. 88. 90. The fact of our finding Lord Pitt, on one occasion, "within a quarter of an hour of falling into the hands of one Jeremiah Duggan—formerly a barber, but then a Major in the Provincials"—shows how very nearly the instructions to Colonel Arnold were proving of use to him. *Parl. Hist.*, vol. xviii. p. 767. Another officer of rank, who resigned his commission at this time, rather than serve against the Americans,

statue still stood in the streets of the American towns, and whose portrait still hung from the walls of half the private dwelling-houses in that country—was regarded by the King, whether justifiably or not, as a humiliation to which his subjects had no right to expect him to submit. Moreover, it was evidently the opinion of the King, as it was also that of Junius, that party interests, if not faction, had much to do with Lord Chatham's long and eloquent advocacy of American rights. Alluding to George Grenville and his Stamp Act, Junius writes in 1769—"Unfortunately for his country, Mr. Grenville was at any rate to be distressed because he was Minister, and Mr. Pitt and Lord Camden were to be the patrons of America, because they were in Opposition. Their declaration gave spirit and argument to the Colonies, and while, perhaps, they meant no more than a ruin of a Minister, they in effect divided one half of the Empire from the other." *

The King, in the mean time—owing to Lord North's repeated entreaties to be allowed to retire from office, and his constant fear of having Lord Chatham forced upon him against his will—had suffered the greatest anxiety of mind. Still, however, he clung to the belief that his

was Thomas, third Earl of Effingham. *Annual Register for* 1776, pp. 42, 43. A third officer of rank, who expressed himself "ready to do his duty, but *not in the line of America*," was Admiral, afterwards Viscount Keppel. *Keppel's Life of Lord Keppel*, vol. ii. p. 2. How far military and naval officers are justified in withholding their services, because their private opinions on public matters differ from those of Government, this is not the place to discuss. As regards, however, Lord Chatham personally, the high authority of his example was obviously calculated to infuse an independent, if not insubordinate, element into the naval and military professions; to animate the Americans in their efforts to shake off their dependency upon the British crown, and lastly, by his so publicly administering a rebuke to the King's Government, to bring it into contempt with his subjects. If Lord Chatham's objections to his son serving against the Americans were quite insurmountable, surely there were other regiments, and other parts of the world, to which he might have obtained his removal, instead of electing the offensive alternative of withdrawing him altogether from the service of his Sovereign. Under all the circumstances, then, it seems to be little to be wondered at that the King should have been greatly incensed, against so assuming and refractory a subject.

* Letter to the Printer of the Public Advertiser, dated January 21, 1769.

favourite Minister would never desert him in his hour of need. "I should have been greatly surprised," he writes to Lord North on the 31st of January, "at the inclination expressed by you to retire, had I not known that, however you may now and then despond, yet that you have too much personal affection for me, and sense of honour, to allow such a thought to take any hold on your mind." * Bitterly the King recalled the days when he had been compelled to submit to the iron and insolent rule of George Grenville, and sensitively his high spirit shrank from being subjected to the same treatment under the tyranny of Chatham. To Lord North he writes about the middle of March—"I declare, in the strongest and most solemn manner, that I do not object to your addressing yourself to Lord Chatham, yet you must acquaint him that I shall never address myself to him but through you, and on a clear explanation that he is to step forth to support an administration wherein you are first Lord of the Treasury; and that I cannot consent to have any conversation with him till the Ministry is formed; that, if he comes into this, I will, as he supports you, receive him with open arms." In the same letter, the King adds—"No advantage to this country, nor personal danger to myself, can make me address myself to Lord Chatham, or to any other branch of Opposition. Honestly, I would rather lose the Crown I now wear, than bear the ignominy of possessing it under their shackles. I might write volumes, if I would state the feelings of my mind, but I have honestly, fairly, and affectionately, told you the whole of my mind, and what I will never depart from. Should Lord Chatham wish to see me before he gives an answer, I shall most certainly refuse it. I have had enough of personal negotiation, and neither my dignity nor my feelings will ever let me again submit to it." †

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 103.
† Lord Brougham's Letters of Eminent Men, vol. i. pp. 108, 109.

Speaking of Lord Chatham as "that perfidious man," the King, on the 17th of March, thus again addresses himself to Lord North—"No consideration in life shall make me stoop to Opposition. I am still ready to accept any part of them that will come to the assistance of my present efficient Ministers; but, whilst any ten men in the kingdom will stand by me, I will not give myself up into bondage. I will rather risk my Crown than do what I think personally disgraceful. It is impossible that the nation should not stand by me. If they will not, they shall have another King, for I never will put my hand to what will make me miserable to the last hour of my life." * The fact is, that the King's feelings towards Lord Chatham at this time, were not merely those of ordinary dislike, but amounted almost to positive aversion. For instance, there is something almost savage in the language in which, in the following letter to Lord North, the King refers to the illustrious statesman. "The making Lord Chatham's family suffer for the conduct of their father is not in the least agreeable to my sentiments. But I should choose to know him to be totally unable to appear on the public stage, before I agree to any offer of that kind, lest it should be wrongly construed to fear of him; and indeed his political conduct the last winter was so abandoned, that he must, in the eyes of the dispassionate, have totally undone all the merit of his former conduct. As to any gratitude to be expected from him or his family, the whole tenor of their lives has shown them void of that most honourable sentiment. But when decrepitude or death puts an end to him as a trumpet of sedition, I shall make no difficulty in placing the second son's name, instead of the father's, and making up the pension three thousand pounds." †

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 110.

† *Ibid.*, p. 90.

Reprehensible as this language assuredly is, we must, on the other hand, take into account the treatment which the King had met with at the hands of his wayward and unmanageable subject. Pure as was the patriotism of this great man; eminent as were his abilities, and splendid as was his eloquence, he was nevertheless not without his faults, and among those faults must be numbered his long-continued and almost rancorous vituperations of his royal master. Let it be remembered that to George the Third he was indebted for his earldom and his pension; that the King in former days had repeatedly paid the most flattering tributes to his genius; that during the Earl's last Administration his Sovereign had exacted no conditions from him, had allowed him to select his own colleagues, and had supported him with the whole weight of the royal authority. During the mysterious malady, which for twenty months in the years 1767 and 1768 had prostrated the great mind of Chatham, the King had uncomplainingly put up with his infirmities; he had anxiously and patiently waited for his restoration to health; he had allowed him to draw the splendid salary attached to his office without discharging any one of its duties; and, in fact, during two years had treated him with a kindness and a consideration for which no amount of gratitude could have been too ample. And yet all this goodness had been repaid by the Earl, not only with persistent and often factious opposition, but by seizing every opportunity of maligning his Sovereign; by accusing him in the House of Lords, and to the British nation, of making a farce of the liberties of his subjects; by charging him with deliberate treachery towards himself, and with being a slave to a base unconstitutional influence behind his throne. Even the fair fame of the King's mother had not escaped the cruel inuendos of the embittered statesman. So unjustifiable, indeed, had been his attacks in the House of Lords, that not only

had more than one Peer occasionally called him to order;* but the Duke of Grafton, on one occasion, went so far as to tell him, to his face, that his words were the effect of "a distempered mind brooding over its own discontents." †

In the mean time, Lord Chatham's answer to the overtures which had been made him, had been received, and, as the King had anticipated, proved to be intolerably exorbitant. The King, to use his own words, was "highly incensed." To Lord North he writes—"I am fairly worn down;" but, he adds, "I will not change the Administration." Nevertheless the King subsequently, although with no very good grace, consented to another overture being made to Lord Chatham; the agent on this occasion being the Marquis of Granby. "I am extremely indifferent," writes the King to Lord North, "whether Lord Granby goes, or does not go, with the abject message of the Rockingham party to Hayes. I will certainly send none to that place."† Of this second negotiation little appears to be known but that it proved to be a signal failure, and that, to the King's increased distress, it led to fresh entreaties on the part of Lord North to be released from the painful responsibilities which attached to his present tenure of office. "My dear Lord," the King writes to him almost pathetically, "your now always recurring to a total change of the Administration obliges me to ask you one clear question. If I will not, by your advice, take the step which I look on as disgraceful to myself, and destruction to my country and family, are you resolved, agreeable to the example of the Duke of Grafton, at the hour of danger, to desert me?"‡ The reply of the good-natured Minister has not been preserved, but, at all events, it seems to have satisfied the mind

Mar. 22.

Mar. 22

* Parl. Hist., vol. xvi. col. 842. See, especially, the debates in the House of Lords of the 2nd of March and 1st of May 1770, and Thackeray's Life of Chatham, vol. ii. pp. 179, &c., and p. 190.

† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 111.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 112. See ante, vol. 1, p. 478, &c.

of his royal master. "I cannot," replies the King, "return the messenger without expressing my satisfaction at your determination not to desert at this moment, which indeed I always thought your sense of honour must prevent." *

There were perhaps no two men in England, who, when they had once leisurely and maturely made up their minds on a particular subject, usually clung more pertinaciously to their opinions than George the Third and Lord Chatham. On the present occasion, the Earl was resolved to refuse office unless invested with full powers, while the King, on his part, was no less doggedly determined to make every sacrifice, rather than place at the head of his councils the man who had so often attempted to degrade him in the eyes of his subjects, and whom, in his political capacity, he regarded as a mischievous firebrand. Certainly, at so momentous a crisis, both sovereign and subject ought to have discarded every selfish consideration. Which of the two then, may well be asked, should have been the first to yield? Which of the two was more to be blamed for their recusancy—the King or Lord Chatham? Unquestionably, we think, the King. Painful as it doubtless would have been to him to find himself a puppet in the hands of his imperious servant, and to be compelled, to use his own words, "to open the road to a set of men who certainly would make him a slave for the remainder of his days," † it was nevertheless his bounden duty, we imagine, to have complied with the almost universal demands and wishes of his subjects. Of Lord Chatham, on the other hand, it has been said, that he, too, at such a season of national difficulty, was bound to make every sacrifice to duty, and that, in whatever capacity his services might be reasonably required, he was under the moral obligation of placing them at the disposal of his King and country. But doubtless Lord Chatham argued that,

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 112.
† *Ibid.*, p. 110.

neither with credit to himself nor with advantage to his country, could he sit in the same Cabinet with a statesman from whose policy he had almost invariably differed, whose abilities and pretensions as a Minister he had been in the habit of treating with the profoundest contempt, and whose name was a detested one across the Atlantic. As the colleague of Lord North, he could scarcely expect to escape sharing the unpopularity of that nobleman, or incurring the mistrust of the American people; whereas, endeared, as he flattered himself he was, to them, he doubtless imagined that, as First Minister of the Crown, and vested with full powers, he might yet be enabled to restore peace and amity between Great Britain and her Colonies, and to preserve the integrity of the Empire.

The King, as we have seen, had had another narrow escape from becoming a prisoner in the hands of the great Whig Lords; indeed, but for an event over which Kings and Ministers exercise no control, Lord Chatham would probably have been forced upon him by the nation. Already had Death laid his hand on that illustrious statesman. He had been, for some time past, confined to his sick chamber at Hayes, suffering from gout and enfeebled in mind as well as body, when it was signified to him that the Duke of Richmond was about to give notice in the House of Lords of his intention to move an Address to the Throne, recommending the withdrawal of his Majesty's armies and fleets from America, and the employment of no other than purely amicable measures, in any future attempts to recover the friendship of the revolted Provinces. As this proposition, though somewhat ambiguously worded, was evidently meant as preliminary to a future recommendation to recognise their Independence, it inflicted, as might be expected, a bitter pang on the heart of Chatham. He loved his country, and he loved her not the less that it had been formerly *his* hand which had raised her from her fallen state; that it had been

his genius which had rendered her glorious among the nations of the earth, and that, to the end of time, his name would probably be associated with many of the proudest of her triumphs. Now, therefore, when his imagination beheld her in a state of impending ruin; now when it was proposed to her to surrender up her colonies—not on the score of justice and sound policy, but notoriously on account of recent military disaster and the dread of the interference of France and Spain—his great heart rebelled against so humiliating a confession of weakness going forth to exulting Europe, and consequently he resolved—so long as breath, strength, and reason might be spared him—to raise his voice in favour of war to the knife with his old and detested antagonist, the House of Bourbon. Turning a deaf ear, not only to the remonstrances of his physicians * but to the affectionate entreaties of his family, he expressed his fixed determination, ill and feeble as he was, of taking a part in the approaching debate in the House of Lords and of preventing, if possible, the degradation of his country. Distressing as it was, to those who loved him, to witness his state of agitation as he was assisted from his sick chamber, it was probably this very excitement which lent him strength to accomplish this, his final, and not least memorable public mission.

On the 7th of April 1778, Lord Chatham made his last and unexpected appearance in the House of Lords. A rumour of his intention to be present had got abroad, but had met with little credence. "Lord Chatham," writes Lord Carlisle, "is supposed to be likely to attend our House, but I have my doubts." † He was accompanied to Westminster by his afterwards illustrious son, William Pitt, then in his nineteenth year, by his third son, a young Naval officer, who did not long survive him, and by his son-in-law Lord Mahon, by whom he was assisted to the private

* Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 51.
† Selwyn Corresp., vol. iii. p. 273.

apartment of the Lord Chancellor where he rested himself till the commencement of the debate. "I saw him in the Prince's Chamber, before he went into the House," writes his friend, Lord Camden, to the Duke of Grafton, "and conversed a little with him. But such was the feeble state of his body, and indeed the distempered agitation of his mind, that I did forbode that his strength would certainly fail him before he had finished his speech."* When Lord Chatham was subsequently supported into the House of Lords by his two younger sons and son-in-law, the spectacle of his attenuated frame, rendered the more affecting from his being attired in the garb of sickness, as well as the recollection of the splendid services which he had rendered to his country, and the dying effort which he was evidently making in her cause, produced, on the minds of all present, mingled sensations of sympathy, admiration, and respect, to which no language probably could do justice. To the peers—who paid him an involuntary tribute of respect by rising to receive him—he bowed courteously as he tottered to his seat. His dress was of rich black velvet; his legs were swathed in flannel. "He looked," said one who was present, "like a dying man; yet never was seen a figure of more dignity. He appeared like a being of a superior species." His face was pale and emaciated; so emaciated, that, beneath his large wig, his aquiline nose and penetrating eye were nearly all of his features that were discernible.†

When the Duke of Richmond had concluded his speech, Lord Chatham, supported by his sons and son-in-law, rose slowly and with difficulty from his seat. At first, he spoke in a feeble and almost inaudible tone, but, as he gradually warmed with his subject, his voice became more distinct, and his manner more animated. Taking one hand from his

* Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. v. pp. 305—6. Edition, 1846.
† Seaward's Anecdotes of Distinguished Persons, vol. ii. p. 383; 5th edition.

crutch, and raising it, with his eyes lifted towards Heaven, he solemnly thanked God that he had been enabled to come there that day to perform his duty. "I am old," he said, "and infirm; have one foot, more than one foot, in the grave. I am risen from my bed to stand up in the cause of my country, perhaps never again to speak in this House. I have made an effort, almost beyond my strength, to come here this day, to express my indignation at an idea which has gone forth of yielding up America. My Lords, I rejoice that the grave has not yet closed upon me; that I am still alive to lift up my voice against the dismemberment of this ancient and most noble monarchy. Pressed down, as I am, by the hand of infirmity, I am little able to assist my country in this most perilous conjuncture; but, my Lords, whilst I have sense and memory, I will never consent to deprive the royal offspring of the House of Brunswick of their fairest inheritance. Where is the man that will dare to advise such a measure? My Lords, his Majesty succeeded to an empire as great in extent, as it was unsullied in reputation. Shall we tarnish the lustre of this nation by an ignominious surrender of its rights and fairest possessions? Shall this great kingdom, which has survived, whole and entire, the Danish depredations, the Scottish inroads, and the Norman conquest—that has stood the threatened invasion of the Spanish Armada—now fall prostrate before the House of Bourbon?"—"My Lords," he concluded, "any state is better than despair. Let us, at least, make one effort, and, if we must fall, let us fall like men! My Lords, ill as I am, yet as long as I can crawl down to this House, and have strength to raise myself on my crutches, or lift my hand, I will vote against giving up the dependency of America on the sovereignty of Great Britain, and, if no other Lord is of opinion with me, I will singly protest against the measure." * As long as he con-

* Parl. Hist., vol. xix. cols. 1023, 1026; Seaward's Anecdotes, vol. ii. p. 384.

tinued speaking, the attention and reverence paid to him by the House are said to have been deeply affecting. It was remarked that even the fall of a handkerchief to the ground might have been heard.

Although, in the spirited and affecting passage which we have quoted, there was much of Lord Chatham's accustomed animation of language and manner, it was nevertheless apparent to those who listened to him that his mental, no less than his physical powers, were on the decline. There were perceptible an evident difficulty in retaining the thread of his argument, repetitions of the same words, and a forgetfulness of names, which left a painful impression on the minds of his audience. "His speech faltered," writes Lord Camden to the Duke of Grafton;—"his sentences broken, and his mind not master of itself. He made shift with difficulty to declare his opinion, but was not able to enforce it by argument. His words were shreds of unconnected eloquence, and flashes of the same fire which he, Prometheus-like, had stolen from heaven, and were then returning to the place from whence they were taken." * The Duke of Richmond having replied to him in a flattering—though, it is said, an irritating—speech,† Lord Chatham again rose, in some excitement, to address the House. At this moment, he was seen to press his hand to his heart and stagger. It was in vain that he endeavoured to stand firm. Had it not been for the timely assistance of the Duke of Cumberland and Lord Temple, who caught him in their arms, he would have fallen to the ground. To all appearance he was in a dying state. The House was in the greatest commotion. The peers crowded round him; the windows were thrown open, and strangers were ordered to withdraw. "He fell back upon his seat," continues Lord

* Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. v. p 306.

† Adolphus's Hist. of England, vol. iii. p. 76, *note*; 4th edition.

Camden, "and was to all appearance in the agonies of death. This threw the whole House into confusion. Every person was upon his legs in a moment, hurrying from one place to another; some sending for assistance, others producing salts, and others reviving-spirits; many crowding about the Earl to observe his countenance; all affected; most part really concerned; and even those, who might have felt a secret pleasure at the accident, yet put on the appearance of distress, except only the Earl of M. who sat still, almost as unmoved as the senseless body itself." That lord would seem to have been Lord Chatham's former rival, Lord Mansfield.* — "The scene," writes Walpole, "was very affecting. His two sons and son-in-law, Lord Mahon, were round him. The House paid a proper mark of respect by adjourning instantly." †

From the scene of his many triumphs, Lord Chatham was carried insensible into the Prince's Chamber,‡ where he was speedily attended by his own physician, Dr. Addington. From hence he was removed to the residence of one of the officers of Parliament, in Downing Street, where he remained till he had sufficiently rallied to admit of his being carried to Hayes. His strength, however, barely sufficed to enable him to support the journey. His constitution continued gradually to sink, till, rather more than four weeks after his seizure in the House of Lords—affectionately tended by the wife and children in whose happiness and welfare was centred all the tenderness of his nature—the

* Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. v. p. 305. "It appears by the Journals," writes Lord Campbell, "that there were only two Earls bearing titles beginning with an M. present that day—the Earl of Marchmont and the Earl of Mansfield. I am much afraid that the latter is alluded to."

† Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 51. Ed. 1857.

‡ The circumstance is rather a remarkable one that so minute an antiquary as Horace Walpole should twice make the mistake of representing Lord Chatham to have been carried to the *Jerusalem Chamber*, which stands at the further or western end of Westminster Abbey, instead of to Prince's Chamber which immediately adjoined the old House of Lords. *See Walpole's Letters*, vol. vii. p. 51; and *Walpole's Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 254.

illustrious Englishman breathed his last.* As the great portion of his life had been devoted to procuring the aggrandizement of his country, so had the remnant of his days been shortened by his affecting endeavour to prevent her humiliation. One of his latest acts, previously to his seizure in the House of Lords, had been to grant permission to his son, Lord Pitt, to re-enter the Army; a concession which would probably not have been obtained from him, but for the impending war between Great Britain and his old and detested enemies, the French. "His last wish," said Lord Nugent in the House of Commons, "was for his country's good."—"Go, my son!" is reported to have been the injunction of the dying patriot to his heir—"Go whither your country calls you! Let her engross all your attention! Spare not a moment, which is due to her service, in weeping over an old man who soon will be no more." †

In the House of Commons, which assembly happened to be sitting at the time of Lord Chatham's death, the announcement of that event created a profound sensation. For the moment, the imperfections of the illustrious dead were forgotten in the remembrance of his lofty genius, in respect for the purity of his life, and gratitude for the triumphs and prosperity which he had achieved for his country. In a brief but eloquent speech, Colonel Barré proposed an address to the throne, recommending that his memory be honoured with a

* Lord Chatham expired at Hayes on the 11th of May 1778, in the seventieth year of his age.

† Lord Nugent's Speech in the House of Commons, May 13, 1778: *Parl. Hist.*, vol. xix. col. 1227. Lord Nugent, on this occasion, applied to Lord Chatham the well-known lines addressed by Pope to Lady Chatham's uncle, Richard Lord Cobham—

> "And you, brave Cobham, to the latest breath,
> Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death.
> Such in those moments as in all the past;
> 'Oh, save my country, Heaven!'—shall be your last."
>
> *Moral Essays. Epistle* 1.

public funeral. This, and subsequently other tributes of national veneration, were agreed to by men of all principles and all parties. A public monument was voted by Parliament; the sum of 20,000*l.* was granted for the discharge of his debts, and an annuity of 4,000*l.* a year was annexed for ever to the Earldom of Chatham. The city of London petitioned that his remains might be allowed to repose under the great dome of St. Paul's, but, whatever may have been the reasons, Westminster Abbey was selected to be their final resting place. In the House of Lords only, a few dissentient voices were raised against awarding full honours to the illustrious dead. The Bill for settling an annuity on the Earldom of Chatham was, as we have already mentioned, opposed by four Peers. "Some few lords, as I hear," writes Lord Camden to the widow of his illustrious friend, "are inclined to mutter some dislike to it. I do not know their names, and I hope they will be too wise to transmit them with this stain to posterity."* Those names there seems to be no weighty reason for concealing. They were James, the last Duke of Chandos, Lord Bathurst, Henry Lord Paget, and William Markham, Archbishop of York.†

With respect to the conduct of Ministers on this occasion, although they acquiesced in the propriety of awarding public honours to the memory of Lord Chatham, scarcely one of them came forward to show any personal respect for the dead. Of the men of consequence and rank, who followed his remains to the tomb, there was scarcely one who was not in opposition to the Government. "Lord Chatham's funeral," writes Gibbon, "was meanly attended, and Government ingeniously contrived to secure the double odium of suffering the thing to be done, and of not doing it with a good grace." ‡ It had been proposed by Lord Shelburne

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. p. 525.

† Parl. Hist., vol. xix. col. 1255; see also *ante*, p. 188.

‡ Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works, p. 292.

in the House of Lords, that the Peers should walk in procession to the grave, but the motion was lost, although only by a majority of one. Among those who voted against it were the Earl of Onslow and the Archbishop of Canterbury, of whom the first had been formerly notorious for his obsequiousness in helping on the deceased Earl with his great coat in the lobby of the House of Lords, while the latter is said to have been indebted to him for his mitre.* Nor was it with a very good grace that the King himself assented to the recommendations of Parliament. "I am rather surprised," he writes to Lord North, "at the vote of a public funeral and monument for Lord Chatham. But I trust it is worded as a testimony of gratitude for his rousing the nation at the beginning of the late war, and his conduct as Secretary of State, or this compliment, if paid to his general conduct, is rather an offensive measure to me personally. As to adding a trifle to the pension, I have no objection." † May 12.

The ceremony of Lord Chatham's interment took place on the 9th of June. After having lain in state for two days in the Painted Chamber, the body was brought through Westminster Hall into New Palace Yard, where, immediately opposite to the entrance to the great Hall—on the same spot on which, in the preceding century, the high-minded Lord Capel, the gay and graceful Lord Holland, and the devoted Duke of Hamilton, had expiated on the scaffold their crime of loyalty to Charles the First—the procession formed which was to conduct the patriot Chatham to his grave. By a circuitous route, along Parliament Street and round by King Street, both of which streets were lined by the Foot Guards, the body was carried to the great western entrance of Westminster Abbey. Eight peers walked in the train of the Chief Mourner. The Banner of the Barony of Chatham was supported by two Dukes and

* Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 65. Ed. 1857.

† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 116.

a Marquis; the "Great Banner" was carried by Colonel Barré; Edmund Burke was one of the pall-bearers. The chief mourner was young William Pitt, who, after the lapse of twenty-eight years, and after having achieved for himself a name almost as illustrious as that of Chatham, was destined to be lowered into the same time-honoured vault, on the margin of which he was now solemnizing a parent's obsequies.

Yet, after all, the obsequies of the great Earl would seem, as Gibbon relates, to have been but "meanly attended." "Garrick's funeral," writes Walpole, "was ten times more attended than Lord Chatham's." Not three of the Court, according to Walpole, attended it, and not a dozen of the Opposition of any note.* The slight sensation, indeed, which the death of so illustrious a man excited in what is called the "great world," suggests a striking and humiliating moral. Lord Chatham himself mentioned, not long before his dissolution, that, on recovering his senses after his fatal seizure in the House of Lords, Lord Le Despencer was the only one of his old acquaintances, connected with the Court, who "so much as asked him how he did." At a time when his contemporaries were decrying his merits, and shrugging their shoulders whenever his genius was descanted upon with enthusiasm, it was to the credit of one at least of them, Horace Walpole, that he strenuously inveighed against such injustice, at the same time predicting the great reputation which posterity has since attached to the name of
Oct. 8. Chatham. "Why not," Walpole writes to Mann, "allow his magnificent enterprises, and good fortune, and confess his defects, instead of being bombast in his praises and at the same time discover that the amplification is insincere? A Minister who inspires great actions must be a great Minister, and Lord Chatham will always appear so, by comparison

* Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 90. Ed. 1857.

with his predecessors and successors. He retrieved our affairs, when ruined by a most incapable Administration, and we are fallen into a worse state since he was removed."*

The grave of Chatham lies near the northern door of Westminster Abbey, opposite the monument of the Duke of Newcastle. Since they laid him in that honoured spot, the pavement around has been, from time to time, raised to receive the remains of his rival Lord Mansfield, of Charles Fox, of Grattan, Canning, Wilberforce, and Palmerston. "In no other cemetery," are the graphic words of Lord Macaulay, "do so many great citizens lie within so narrow a space. High over those venerable graves towers the stately monument of Chatham, and from above, his effigy, graven by a cunning hand, seems still, with eagle face and outstretched arm, to bid England be of good cheer and to hurl defiance at her foes. The generation which reared that memorial of him has disappeared. The time has come when the rash and indiscriminate judgments which his contemporaries passed on his character may be calmly revised by history. And history, while, for the warning of vehement, high, and daring natures, she notes his many errors, will yet deliberately pronounce that, among the eminent men whose bones lie near his, scarcely one has left a more stainless, and none a more splendid name." †

It has been argued by the admirers of Lord Chatham's genius, that had his life been spared and his elevation to the premiership been conceded by the King, America would have been prevailed upon to return to her allegiance, and that the disruption of the empire would thus have been prevented. Doubtless, indebted as America was to him on account of his long and unwearying efforts in defence of her liberties, and the many heart-stirring appeals which he had delivered in her behalf, there was no living Englishman to

* Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 135.

† Macaulay's Essays, vol. iii. p. 625. Ed. 1860.

whom a mission of conciliation could have been entrusted with a better prospect of success. Moreover, the diversity of opinion on religious and political questions which, at this time, existed among the American people—the dissensions which notoriously prevailed even in Congress itself—as well as the numerical strength of the loyal party in America—would unquestionably have enhanced his chances of carrying his object into execution. But, on the other hand, many were the difficulties which he would have had to encounter. A considerable period of time, it must be remembered, had elapsed since the Americans had proclaimed to the world their resolution to remain a free, independent, and sovereign people. They had learned to take a just and even haughty pride in their new sovereignty. They had discovered how vast were the resources of the great continent of which they were the natural heirs, and how irrational therefore it was to expect that so colossal a territory should long remain an appanage of a small island lying far away across the broad Atlantic. Success on the field of battle had shown them that, neither in military genius nor in military intrepidity, were they much inferior to the brave islanders who were attempting to effect their subjection. As a sovereign people, they had entered into engagements with more than one European power. They knew that the eyes of Europe were fixed upon them, and a young people are ever sensitively tenacious of the opinion of the world. Was it to be expected, then, that, at the invitation, even of the wisest and greatest of European statesmen, they would have been induced to stultify their late proceedings and principles, and, in exchange for the freedom and empire which they had achieved in the New World, voluntarily return to what they regarded as the monarchical misgovernment and aristocratic insolence of the Old? Under these circumstances, not only, we imagine, would any attempt on the part of Lord Chatham to lure back the Americans to their allegiance have

encountered a mortifying failure, but it has been argued that it was as well for his posthumous fame that he was not permitted the opportunity of making the attempt.*

The two following documents furnish us with passing evidence of the interest taken by the King in military affairs, and especially in the army of America. It should be mentioned that, during the time that Sir Henry Clinton held the appointment of Commander in Chief of the British land forces in America, no officer appears to have been permitted to return to England from that country on leave, without his application having been previously submitted to the King.

Lord Barrington to General Howe.

"War Office, 15*th August*, 1776.

"Sir,

"The King has ordered me to acquaint you that the return of Lieut. Colonel Blunt to England, just at the moment when the Regiment he commands was going to be employed on the warmest and most important service, could not but surprise and displease his Majesty. However, it having been represented by the Lieutenant Colonel, through me, that he had not asked this indulgence, which had been voluntarily offered him by your Excellency from a knowledge of the inextricable difficulties of his private affairs, arising from the purchase of his present commission, which difficulties must continue till his arrival in England, the King has taken no farther notice of this matter, than by directing the Lieut. Colonel to return to his duty the moment he can settle these affairs.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,
"Your Excellency's most obedient
"and most humble servant,
"Barrington." †

"His Excellency,
The Hon^ble General Howe,
&c., &c., &c."

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* Quarterly Review, vol. lxvi. p. 266. Lord Macaulay's Essays, vol. iii. pp. 621-2. Ed. 1860. See, however, *Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England*, vol. vi. pp. 343—7.

† American MS. in the Library of the Royal Institution.

Lord Amherst to General Sir Henry Clinton.

(Extract.)

"WHITEHALL, 6 *February*, 1781.

"I have the honour to acquaint you the King observed in the list of promotions that Captain Mackenzie was appointed Major to the 23rd Regiment of Foot in the room of Major Mecan deceased; that Major Temple was the eldest Captain; and that as he was now actually on his passage to America, his case was a little hard; and that as he had the character of being a very good officer, his Majesty hoped you would be able to find soon a favourable opportunity of promoting him to a Majority." *

* American MS. in the Library of the Royal Institution.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Commissioners sent to the Revolted Colonists—Refused direct communication with Congress—Their Message delivered—Reply of Congress—Feelings of exasperation in America increased by the tone of Proclamations issued by the Commissioners—General Sir Henry Clinton's march from Philadelphia to New York—Indecisive action at Monmouth Court House—Fruitless demonstrations of the French Fleet at New York and Rhode Island—The French unsuccessfully attempt to retake the Island of St. Lucia—The Channel Fleet—Engagement with the French off Ushant—Courts-Martial on Admirals Keppel and Palliser—Illuminations and Riots in honour of Keppel—The combined French and Spanish Fleets in the Channel—Naval Operations in the West Indies—Changes in the Administration—Letters of the King to his Ministers.

THE three Commissioners, appointed to proceed to America and to treat with the American Congress, were Frederick Earl of Carlisle, William Eden afterwards Lord Auckland, and George Johnstone, Esquire, better known as Governor Johnstone.* The Secretary to the mission was Adam Ferguson, the historian of the Roman Republic and Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh. With the exception of Johnstone, who was well versed in American affairs, little judgment seems to have been displayed in the selection of the Commissioners. Eden, for instance, had recently distinguished himself by denouncing American Independence in the House of Commons; while Lord Carlisle, though gifted with natural good sense and abilities of no mean order, was as yet known to the world merely

* Third son of Sir James Johnstone, of Westerhall. He had formerly held the appointment of Governor of West Florida. Lord Howe, and his brother, Sir William, were also included as Commissioners in the letters-patent, provided that they should be still in America on the arrival of their colleagues.

as a young man of pleasure, as a leader of fashion, as the delight of the Macaronis at White's and Brooks's, and the loser of almost ruinous sums at the play-table at Almack's. "The Muses and Graces," said Wilkes in the House of Commons, "and a group of little laughing loves, were in his train, and for the first time crossed the Atlantic."*

When, early in June, the Commissioners reached Philadelphia, the state of affairs struck them as unsettled and calamitous in the extreme. The British army was on the point of disembarking for New York. Philadelphia was in a state of the greatest confusion. To George Selwyn Lord
June 10. Carlisle writes two or three days after his arrival in that city—"I have this morning, at five o'clock, been taking a ride into the country, about ten miles; grieved I am to say, eight miles beyond our possessions. Our lines extend only two, and the provincial army is posted very strongly about six-and-twenty miles distant. This is market-day, and, to protect the people bringing in provisions, which otherwise they would not dare to do, large detachments, to the amount of above two thousand men, are sent forward into the country." Lord Carlisle, nevertheless, found himself in very comfortable quarters. "I am lodged," he writes, "in one of the best houses in the town; and indeed it is a very excellent one, perfectly well furnished. I am not, I own, quite at my ease, for coming into a gentleman's house without asking his leave, taking possession of all the best apartments, and placing a couple of sentries at his door, using his plate, &c., &c., are very repugnant to my disposition. I make him and his wife a visit every day; talk politics with them, and we are the best friends in the world. They are very agreeable, sensible people, and you never would be out of their company."†

For many reasons, it was the object of the Commissioners

* Parl. Hist., vol. xix. col. 1338.

† Selwyn Corresp., vol. iii. pp. 281—2.

to endeavour to open a direct communication with Congress, and at once to bring forward the ample powers entrusted to them. Having in vain, however, applied to General Washington for a passport for their secretary, Dr. Ferguson, no alternative was left them but to set forth, in writing, the terms which they were authorized to offer, and to solicit Congress to take them under their most solemn consideration. Those terms consisted chiefly of a guarantee to America of "perfect freedom of legislation and internal government," the withdrawal for ever of British troops from her soil, and a proffer of seats in the British House of Commons to representatives of the different States. As these concessions were greater than any for which the Americans themselves had formerly petitioned, and, indeed, comprised every right and privilege short of total separation, it was fondly hoped that the reply of Congress might prove favourable. In the mean time, the Commissioners proceeded to New York, where they anxiously awaited the result of their communication.

The aspect of affairs at New York appeared to Lord Carlisle no less melancholy than at Philadelphia. "We are blocked up," he writes to Selwyn, "by a French fleet. We July 22.
are kept in prison, as we dare not ride beyond our posts towards the country. If any attack is made, either by sea or land, we risk more than we are likely to gain. If certain events, which are not improbable, should take place, we shall be inevitably starved." Again he writes—"Every- Oct. 23.
thing is upon a great scale upon this continent. The rivers are immense; the climate violent in heat and cold; the prospects magnificent; the thunder and lightning tremendous. The disorders incident to the country make every constitution tremble. We have nothing on a great scale with us but our blunders, our misconduct, our ruin, our losses, our disgraces and misfortunes, that will mark the reign of a Prince who deserves better treatment and kinder

fortunes."* Another accomplished man of pleasure and fashion, General Fitzpatrick, speaks in no less enthusiastic terms of the magnificent country in which, most unwillingly, he found himself carrying arms, and in no less deprecatory terms of the "execrable war" which was laying it waste. "You cannot imagine," he writes to the Countess of Ossory from New York on the 2nd of June 1777, "anything half so beautiful as this country. It is impossible to conceive anything so delightful. Lady Holland, in spite of her politics, would, I am sure, feel for it, if she could see the ruin and desolation we have introduced into the most beautiful, and I believe once the happiest part of the Universe."—"The inhabitants," adds General Fitzpatrick, "are, as far as I can judge from the few I have seen, and which I am assured are a very just type of the whole, to us certainly the most unpleasant, formal, precise, disagreeable in the world, but I do not see that this is a sufficient reason for extirpating the whole race, which seems now generally understood to be our object."†

To the arguments and entreaties of the Commissioners, the Congress, as might have been anticipated, turned a deaf ear. Their reply was imperative and final. Notwithstanding, they said, the treatment which they had experienced from Great Britain, and the "savage manner" in which she had carried on war in their territory, they were desirous of peace. As a preliminary step, however, they insisted that the mother-country should recognise their Independence, or at all events recall her armies and fleets. Such a measure, they continued, would be a guarantee of the sincerity of the King of England, and in that case only,

* Selwyn Corresp., vol. iii. pp. 301, 340.

† Walpole's Corresp., vol. vii. pp. 1, 2, *note*. La Fayette, on the other hand, thought the Americans "as agreeable as his enthusiasm had painted them."—"Simplicity of manners," he writes to his wife, "kindness, love of country, and of liberty, and a delightful equality, everywhere prevail." *Washington's Writings*, vol. v. p. 452, *Appendix*.

and in no other, would they consent to negotiate with his Commissioners.

These demands being in excess of the powers vested in Lord Carlisle and his colleagues, they prepared to return to their own country. Previously, however, to quitting the shores of America, they published an appeal to her people, inviting them, by as many tempting arguments as they could set forth, to return to their allegiance to the British Crown, and insisting that, whatever miseries might result from a prolongation of the war, Congress would be responsible for them to God and man. Needless it is to observe, that neither this, nor another manifesto, of a more threatening character, published by them immediately on the eve of their depar- Oct. 3.
ture, produced the effect desired by the Commissioners. "The accursed proclamation of the Commissioners," writes Lord Rockingham to Admiral Keppel, "and the barbarities which have ensued, have so fatally added to the indignation and resentment of America, that nothing but ample revenge and retaliation will now probably prevail in the minds of the Americans." *

Among other embarrassing incidents, which had befallen Lord Carlisle and his associates in the course of their fruitless mission, had been an hostile challenge, addressed to the Earl in his capacity of principal Commissioner, by the celebrated Marquis de la Fayette, then enjoying high military rank in the American army. One of the manifestoes of the Commissioners had contained some severe animadversions on the conduct of the French Court, for which the Marquis chose to consider them responsible, not in their corporate diplomatic capacity, but as private gentlemen. Accordingly he despatched a *cartel* to Lord Carlisle, in which, in language of a very provoking and somewhat swaggering character, he called upon him to grant him an hostile meet-

* Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. p. 386.

ing. Lord Carlisle very properly declined to give him the satisfaction he required. "I have received," he wrote back, "your letter transmitted to me from M. Guinot, and I confess I find it difficult to return a serious answer to its contents. The only one that can be expected from me, as the King's Commissioner—and which you ought to have known—is, that I do, and ever shall, consider myself solely responsible to my country and King, and not to any individual, for my public conduct and language." Another untoward circumstance which befell the Commission was a revelation which was made to the American Government, that Governor Johnstone, through the medium of an accomplished lady of the name of Ferguson, had offered a bribe of ten thousand pounds to a distinguished member of Congress, Joseph Reed, as a condition of his bringing about a reunion between Great Britain and her former Colonies. "I am not worth purchasing," was Reed's indignant reply, "but, such as I am, the King of Great Britain is not rich enough to do it." Withholding only the name of the lady, Reed, who had formerly been Washington's aide-de-camp, and afterwards his Adjutant-General, deemed it his duty to communicate the fact to Congress, who, apparently no less indignant than himself, passed a resolution, on the 11th of August, that "it is incompatible with the honour of Congress to hold any manner of correspondence or intercourse with George Johnstone, Esq.; especially to negotiate with him upon affairs in which the cause of liberty is concerned."*

While the Commissioners had been employed on their futile mission, the royal army was on its march from Philadelphia to New York, with the object of concentrating the British forces in that province. In the mean time, Sir William Howe, at his own request, had been superseded, and the command of the army transferred to Sir Henry

* Reed's Life of Joseph Reed in *Sparks's American Biography*, vol. viii. pp. 413—416; Gordon's American Revolution, vol. iii. pp. 170—3.

Clinton, a brave, upright and skilful officer. The able manner in which Sir Henry conducted his army across an hostile country—encumbered, as he was, by a train of baggage twelve miles in length, the bridges broken down, and the enemy, led by Washington, pressing closely upon his rear—has been cited by competent judges as a masterpiece of military talent. The primary object of Sir Henry Clinton was to extricate his forces as soon as possible from an enemy's country; while it was not less the object of Washington to harass the British by all the means in his power, without risking the doubtful result of a general action. Accordingly, during the march, only one collision of a serious character took place between the two armies. This affair occurred at Monmouth Court House, on the 28th of June, when, after a severe and obstinate struggle, the opposing forces found themselves retaining at nightfall the same positions which they had occupied in the morning, the loss on each side amounting to about three hundred and sixty. So intense, it may be mentioned, was the heat of the day that, on the British side, three sergeants and fifty-six men dropped down dead without having received a wound." * It was not the policy of the British General, as we have seen, to remain longer than he could avoid on hostile ground, and consequently, having enjoined the profoundest silence on his forces, he resumed his march at midnight, and on the 5th of July arrived at New York, without having met with further molestation from the Americans.

The principal motive which had occasioned the withdrawal of the British army from Philadelphia, was the departure from the shores of France of a powerful squadron of ships of war, the destination of which was believed to be

* Stedman's Hist. of the American War, vol. ii. p. 21. According to a contemporary American account—"Of the enemy's dead, many have been found without any wound, but, being heavily clothed, they sank under the heat and fatigue. We are well assured that the Hessians absolutely refused to engage, declaring it was too hot." *Moore's Diary of the American Revolution*, vol. ii. p. 68.

the Delaware. It consisted of as many as twelve sail of the line, while the naval force under the command of Lord Howe, at the time when the two Admirals subsequently confronted each other off New York, comprised only eleven, and these inferior in point of size, and in weight of metal, to the French ships. Nevertheless, when the movements of the French Admiral, d'Estaing, seemed to threaten an immediate attempt to force the harbour of New York, Lord Howe manifested no unwillingness to receive his attack. In the mean time, the people of New York, who were promised as exciting a spectacle as can well be conceived, awaited the result with the liveliest interest. Should France succeed in gaining a victory over her ancient foe, the recognition of American Independence by Great Britain, and the termination of the terrible war which was devastating the American continent, would not improbably follow. In vain, however, the citizens of New York strained their eyes towards the waters, in the hope of beholding the banner of France floating over the renowned flag, in the triumphs of which American as well as Englishman had, even in the memory of children, equally and mutually gloried. D'Estaing, whether from want of spirit, or, as he himself stated, from there not being a sufficient depth of water to float his ships, thought proper to abandon for the present his hostile intentions, and, to the great grief and
July 22. disappointment of the Americans, sailed with the first favourable wind for Rhode Island.

The recovery of that beautiful island from the rule of the British was, at this time, an object of paramount importance to the American Government. Congress, therefore, fully confiding in the promises of co-operation and support which it had received from the French Admiral, despatched ten thousand men, under the command of General Sullivan, to invest the ancient town of Newport, now one of the gayest of fashionable watering-places. Thither, D'Estaing

bent his course, and thus the fall of Newport seemed to be inevitable, when the British fleet, strengthened by reinforcements from England, was to be seen bearing towards the Island with every appearance of seeking battle with the French. Again, in sight of their own shores, the Americans were promised the exciting spectacle of the two greatest naval Powers in the world contending in deadly combat for the sovereignty of the seas. The interest, on this occasion, was even more intense than it had formerly been at New York, inasmuch as Sir Henry Clinton was known to be advancing to the relief of Newport, and consequently the fate of General Sullivan, and of the ten thousand men under his command, seemed to depend upon the co-operation and valour of the French. Again, however, a bitter disappointment awaited the Americans. At the very conjuncture, when the rival fleets were to be seen manœuvring for the advantage of the weather-gage, a storm of unusual violence effectually separated them from each other. Whatever may have been the real amount of damage sustained on that occasion by the stately ships of D'Estaing, he pleaded the absolute necessity—a necessity, however, which was afterwards loudly and angrily impugned by the Americans—of refitting them as speedily as possible, and accordingly, turning a deaf ear to the earnest remonstrances of General Sullivan, and leaving him to extricate himself and his army from their critical position as best they might, he withdrew his fleet into the safe and comfortable harbour of Boston. The principal consequences of the defection of the French Admiral—if his conduct really merits so harsh an epithet—were the evacuation of Rhode Island by the Americans, and the consequent kindling in their minds of bitter feelings of animosity against their new allies. In the town of Boston, more especially, such was the exasperation of its seafaring population, when, day after day, and night after night, they

witnessed the provoking spectacle of French sailors lounging about their streets, and sauntering into their places of amusement, that some serious riots were the consequence, which, but for the judicious precautions adopted by the authorities, might have led to grave political results.

D'Estaing now turned his attention to the British West India Islands, one of which, Dominica, had already surrendered to a French force commanded by the Marquis de Bouillé, Governor of Martinico. Since then, however, ample amends had been made to the British for its loss, by the capture of St. Lucia from the French. It had been a favourite theory of that great naval commander, Sir George Rodney, that as long as Great Britain continued formidable on the ocean, the possession of that important island would secure to her the sovereignty of the West Indies.* This conviction he had succeeded in impressing on the British Ministers, and consequently, in obedience to orders received from England, Sir Henry Clinton had despatched to St. Lucia a considerable military force, which, supported by a small squadron under the command of Rear Admiral Barrington, had with little difficulty effected the reduction of the island. The enterprise, however, had been accomplished not a day too soon. The troops had scarcely accomplished their landing and carried the advanced posts of the enemy, when the formidable fleet of D'Estaing appeared in sight. Admiral Barrington's squadron consisted of only three ships of the line, and some frigates; yet so judiciously had he extended them across the entrance to the careenage, and under the protection of the batteries, that when D'Estaing bore down upon him with twelve sail of the line, he found the British

* Rodney's arguments will be found contained in a letter addressed by him to the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Earl of Sandwich, dated May 1778. *See Mundy's Life of Rodney*, vol. i. p. 202. St. Lucia was restored to France at the peace in 1783, but having been again taken by the English in 1803, was definitively assigned to Great Britain by the Treaty of Paris.

position so strong, and the reception he met with was so warm, as to compel him to retire. D'Estaing's next step was to disembark five thousand soldiers at another part of the island, at whose head he led a gallant attack on the British lines. On land, however, he met with the same determined resistance which had opposed him on the waters, whereupon, despairing of being able to carry out the orders of his Government, he re-embarked his troops, and put back to sea, leaving St. Lucia to its fate.

While these events were passing on the other side of the Atlantic, hostilities had commenced on the high seas, nearer home. At this period, the chief reliance of Great Britain for escape from foreign invasion, and for the protection of her homeward commerce, lay in the gallantry and efficiency of her Channel fleet. On the safety of the Channel fleet, said Lord Shelburne in the House of Lords, depended the salvation of the country. The Admiral, who was selected by the King and Cabinet to command this important force, was Admiral, afterwards Lord Keppel, an officer who, though apparently possessing but few claims to originality of genius, was nevertheless not only a brave man and a thorough seaman, but was endowed with that most essential qualification in a naval Commander in Chief, the faculty of completely establishing himself in the affections and confidence of his officers and men. Perhaps, had the choice fallen upon Rodney, it would have been better for the fame and interests of the country; but as Rodney had not as yet achieved the great victory which has rendered his name so glorious in the annals of his country, the selection of Keppel would scarcely seem to have been so unjust and unwise a proceeding as it has been sometimes represented. Moreover, as Keppel was not only a Whig Member of Parliament, but an unsparing and systematic opponent of Government, the fact of the Tory Ministers of the day having selected him to

command the Channel fleet, instead of being discreditable to them, would rather seem to do them honour.

On the 10th of June Keppel weighed anchor with twenty-one ships of the line under his command, which were subsequently increased to twenty-three.* His principal instructions were to prevent the junction of the two French squadrons, which were severally fitting out at Toulon and Brest; not to risk an action if he considered the force of the enemy disproportionately superior to his own; and, as "the principal object of his care and attention," to keep the sea clear behind him, so as, in the event of emergency, to be able to protect the shores of Great Britain and Ireland. For some time after leaving St. Helen's, the officers and men of his fleet had been anxiously on the look out for the enemy, when, at the entrance of the Bay of Biscay, there appeared in sight two French frigates, the "Belle Poule" and "Licorne," which, as it afterwards appeared, had been sent to hover about the British fleet, in order to discover its intentions and numerical strength. War, as yet, had not been formally declared between France and Great Britain, and consequently Keppel found himself suddenly placed in a position of heavy responsibility. To chase and capture the vessels in sight might entail upon him the charge of having precipitated a great European war; while, on the other hand, if he allowed them to escape, he risked their carrying important information to the enemy, who might thus bring to bear upon him a fleet far superior to his own. Government, it should be stated, had not only been unable to afford him any accurate information respecting the strength of the enemy,† but it was also insisted by the enemies of Administration, that

* Keppel's Life of Admiral Viscount Keppel, vol. ii. pp. 25, 26.

† Lord Howe had formerly complained, and with good reason, of having been kept in a similar unfortunate state of ignorance. We have the assurance of the Duke of Grafton, given on the authority of Lord Howe himself, that, owing to neglect or ignorance on the part of the Admiralty, the French fleet under D'Estaing had arrived

the Admiralty, either from carelessness or with the deliberate object of shifting responsibility from their own shoulders, had drawn up his instructions with reprehensible obscurity.* Under the circumstances, Keppel adopted the boldest alternative of the two. The "Milford" frigate was signalled to chase the "Licorne," and the "Arethusa" the "Belle Poule." The latter vessel, after a warm engagement, in which the "Arethusa" suffered severely, escaped by running into a small bay surrounded by rocks, from which, on the following morning, she was towed out of reach of the British fleet. The "Licorne" was less fortunate. Having been captured by the "Milford," she was placed alongside the "America," commanded by Lord Longford, whose strict orders were to keep a careful watch over his charge. During the night, no attempt would seem to have been made by her to escape. On the following morning, however, as Lord Longford was standing on the gunwale of his ship, conversing on friendly terms with her captain, he perceived, to his surprise, that the "Licorne" was making preparations for setting sail; and accordingly, having in vain remonstrated with that officer on the procedure, he ordered a gun to be fired across her bow as a warning to her to desist. To his great astonishment and to that of his crew, the French frigate replied by the discharge of a whole broadside into the "America," accompanied by the almost simultaneous striking of her colours. Had Lord Longford fired into, and sunk her, he would

off the shores of America without his having received any intimation that such a force was even in existence. Duke of Grafton's MS. Memoirs: *Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England*, vol. vi. p. xxvii. Appendix.

* The following extract from Keppel's instructions is curious as showing that the contingency of his finding himself watched by the Enemy's frigates had not, in spite of the charges of the Opposition, been overlooked by the Admiralty, and will also assist the reader in forming his own opinion how far the charge brought against that Department was well merited or not;—"In case any French frigates of war should attend upon the Fleet, or appear to be watching your motions, you are to oblige them to desist, and, on their refusal, to seize them and send them to England." *Keppel's Life of Admiral Viscount Keppel*, vol. ii. p. 28.

doubtless have been justified; but, with becoming humanity, he contented himself with sending her under the stern of the Commander in Chief's flag ship, the "Victory."

Admiral Keppel was still in a painful state of uncertainty in regard to the strength of the enemy, when fortunately another French frigate, the "Pallas," fell into his power. Her papers furnished him with the information he required. The French fleet, it appeared, numbered as many as thirty-two sail of the line, a force so superior to that of the British, that Keppel, instead of risking an engagement, considered it his duty to return to England. Here he remained till the 9th of July, when, with twenty-four line of battle ships under his command, which were shortly afterwards increased to thirty, he again set sail in search of the enemy. By this time, the French fleet, commanded by Count d'Orvilliers, and now superior to that of Keppel by only two ships of the line, had also put to sea, and on the 23rd hove in sight of the British force off Ushant. The engagement, which followed, was one of the most unsatisfactory and indecisive on record. After manœuvring for four days, and after an action of three hours in which neither party lost a single ship, the two fleets separated for the night. Willingly, it is said, would Keppel have renewed the action on the following morning, but the French had taken advantage of the darkness to retreat towards their own ports, and when day dawned their fleet was nearly out of sight. Keppel's ships having suffered considerable injury in the action, no alternative was left him but to carry them back to England for repair.

The party squabbles and senseless popular riots, which were the consequences of this great national disappointment—the charges of misconduct and neglect brought against Keppel by his third officer in command, Vice Admiral Sir Hugh Palliser—the counter-charges brought by Keppel

against Palliser, and the courts-martial consequently held upon each of these eminent naval officers, are matters which require no lengthened recapitulation. Whether either, or both of them, were blameless, are questions in which posterity takes but little interest. Doubtless, in the judgment of those who differed with them in politics, the chief crime of the one, lay in his being a Tory and holding office, and that of the other in his being a Whig and an aspirer after place. Palliser was a Lord of the Admiralty and a staunch supporter of Lord North in the House of Commons, whereas Keppel, as has been already stated, was not only a Whig, but a distinguished and formidable opponent of the Government. In the contest between the two Admirals almost all the advantage lay with Keppel. Palliser was simply the son of an officer of the Line, indebted entirely to his own zeal and merit for the distinguished position which he filled at the head of his profession. Keppel, on the contrary, was connected by the ties of blood with many of the great Whig Lords, who made the cause of their kinsman the cause of Opposition. At his famous trial on board the "Britannia" at Portsmouth, he was countenanced and upheld by the presence of no less distinguished personages than his near and powerful relative, the Duke of Richmond, by that of a late Prime Minister, the Marquis of Rockingham; by two Princes of the Blood, the Dukes of Cumberland and Gloucester; and by the four most brilliant Opposition speakers in Parliament, Burke, Fox, Sheridan, and Erskine. Another advantage, possessed by Keppel over his rival, was the popularity which his engaging manners, and many amiable qualities, had obtained for him in the House of Commons. "We had yesterday," writes Dec. 11. General Fitzpatrick to Lord Ossory, "the most interesting debate I ever remember to have heard. The House was violently disposed to Keppel, who spoke like a man inspired, and no tool was bold enough to venture one word

in favour of Palliser." * Palliser, in fact, had no chance against his more aristocratic, and, at the same time, more popular rival.

That the Opposition should have sought to convert into political capital the recent want of success on the seas, by shifting the blame, if there were any, from the shoulders of Keppel to those of the Ministers, was perhaps only what was to be expected. Accordingly, in and out of Parliament, the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Earl of Sandwich, was charged with the grossest and most culpable mismanagement of naval affairs; the attack on the Admiralty amounting, of course, to nothing more nor less than an attack on the Government. The public, deriving their cue from the speeches delivered in Parliament, and from the arguments and invectives of the Press, took the part of one or other of the two Admirals; the great majority declaring in favour of the Opposition Admiral. Notwithstanding the first return of Keppel to port had, very recently, been attributed to the most disgraceful motives, and that he himself had been threatened with the fate of Admiral Byng,† he was no sooner cried up as a martyr to Ministerial injustice, than he at once became the idol of the populace. Palliser, on the other hand, was known to be highly respected by his Sovereign, and consequently it was taken for granted that the King must be inimical to Keppel. To Palliser the world appears to have been singularly unjust. No braver seaman, nor more rightminded man, probably existed. At this very time, he was suffering from the wounds which he had received in the service of his country; yet if, instead of being one of her most gallant and able defenders, he had been her bitterest enemy, he could scarcely have been exposed to fiercer and louder vituperations. "Perhaps," writes Palliser's contemporary,

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 204.

† Keppel's Life of Admiral Viscount Keppel, vol. ii. p. 34.

Lord Sheffield, "no man was ever more cruelly used by the public, through a violent party-spirit." Let it be ever remembered to Palliser's credit, that, on the eve of his trial by Court-Martial, he resigned, for the purpose of being the better able to vindicate his personal honour, not only his seat in the House of Commons, but his appointments as General of Marines and Governor of Scarborough Castle, the joint emoluments of which are said to have amounted to four thousand a year. Thus by the bitterness of party-spirit was a brave man prejudiced and almost ruined! "As an old wound has broken out again," writes Gibbon, "they say he must have his leg cut off as soon as he has time." *

But it was Keppel's acquittal, with flying colours, on the charges brought against him by Palliser, which brought to a climax the popularity of the one Admiral, and the unpopularity of the other. If Keppel, instead of having fought an indecisive action, had achieved a glorious victory, the enthusiasm, which the announcement of the verdict kindled in the public mind, could scarcely have been greater.† "In a night or two," writes Gibbon to Lord Sheffield, "we shall be in a blaze of illumination from the zeal of naval heroes, land-patriots, and tallow-chandlers; the last not the least sincere." ‡ Subsequently, for two nights, the cities of London and Westminster were illuminated in honour of the popular idol. Wilkes had scarcely been treated with greater distinction. Both Houses of Parliament returned Keppel their thanks for having gloriously upheld the honour of the British Navy. The

1779. Feb. 11.

* Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works, p. 295. Ed. 1837.

† The sentence passed upon Palliser in no respect reflected upon his personal honour. The Court censured him, not for want of promptitude in engaging the enemy, for he had done all that the crippled state of his ship had enabled him to effect, but for his tardiness in communicating his distressed situation to his Commander in Chief. In other respects the Court pronounced his conduct to have been highly meritorious. Sir Hugh Palliser died March 19, 1796, at the age of 74.

‡ Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works, p. 295. Ed. 1837.

City of London presented him with its freedom. Sir Hugh Palliser was burnt in effigy on Tower Hill. Not only did the great Whig ladies appear at the opera with caps *à la Keppel*, but blue cockades, bearing the word "Keppel," were almost universally worn in London. In all parts of the kingdom, alehouse after alehouse hoisted the sign of the Keppel's Head. As might have been anticipated, the two nights on which London and Westminster were illuminated were nights of popular riot. "Poor Sir Hugh's house in Pall Mall," writes Sir Joshua Reynolds, "was entirely gutted and its contents burnt in St. James's Square." * "Perhaps," writes the King to Lord North, "there never was a more general run than against poor Sir Hugh Palliser." † Lord North's house also was forcibly entered. "I have just heard," writes the King to him on the following day, "of the violent attack in the night on your house, which providentially proved abortive by the activity of the military." ‡ Lord Bute and Lord George Germaine had their windows broken. The iron gates in front of the Admiralty court-yard were wrenched from their hinges. The official residences of Lord Sandwich and of another Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Lisburne, were attacked, and the two lords forced to make their escape as best they could.

It was more than hinted in the newspapers of the day—and the fact has since been proved beyond a doubt—that among the rioters were more than one person of distinction and birth. "A lady of rank," writes Captain Brenton,§ "assured me that she actually saw Mr. Pitt break her windows." Among the mob which attacked the Admiralty were Charles Fox, who had recently been a member of its Board, and Mr. Thomas Grenville, afterwards First Lord

* Keppel's Life of Admiral Viscount Keppel, vol. ii. p. 190.

† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 129. Edition, 1858.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 128. § Brenton's Life of the Earl of St. Vincent, vol. i. p. 24.

of the Admiralty.* "It happened, at three in the morning," writes Walpole, "that Charles Fox, Lord Derby,† and his brother, Major Stanley, and two or three more young men of quality, having been drinking at Almack's, suddenly thought of making a tour of the streets, and were joined by the Duke of Ancaster, who was very drunk;‡ and, what showed it was no premeditated scheme, the latter was a courtier, and had actually been breaking windows. Finding the mob before Palliser's house, some of the young lords said—'Why don't you break Lord George Germaine's windows?' The populace had been so little tutored that they asked who he was, and being encouraged, broke his windows. The mischief pleasing the juvenile leaders, they marched to the Admiralty, forced the gates, and demolished Palliser's and Lord Lisburne's windows. Lord Sandwich, exceedingly terrified, escaped through the garden *with his mistress*, Miss Ray, to the Horse Guards, and there betrayed a most manifest panic." §

The circumstance here incidentally mentioned, of Miss Ray having been the companion of Lord Sandwich's flight from the Admiralty, affords a curious instance of the barefaced laxity of the times. Not only did a First Lord of the Admiralty publicly keep a mistress at his official residence at Whitehall, but we also know it to have been a fact that even Bishops, with their wives, sat unblushingly through the musical and dramatic performances with which the Earl was in the habit of entertaining his neighbours at

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 224; Keppel's Life of Admiral Viscount Keppel, vol. ii. p. 192.

† Edward twelfth Earl of Derby, grandfather of the present Earl, died October 21, 1834, in his eighty-third year.

‡ Robert Bertie, fourth Duke of Ancaster, hereditary Lord Great Chamberlain, died in less than five months from the date of this frolic, viz., 8th July 1779. His mother, Mary Duchess of Ancaster, was at this time Mistress of the Robes to Queen Charlotte, an appointment which she held for as many as thirty-two years. *Beatson's Political Index*, vol. i. p. 451.

§ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 343. The Duke of Ancaster, it is said, passed the night in the watchhouse. Lord Derby used often to describe the share which he took in the riots. *Keppel's Life of Admiral Viscount Keppel*, vol. ii. p. 192.

Hinchinbroke; perfectly well aware that the unrivalled songstress, to whom they listened, was the paramour of their host, and the mother of his children. Many years had passed away since this ill-fated woman, then a young girl of sixteen, had been induced by Lord Sandwich to abandon her profession as a mantua-maker in Tavistock Street Covent Garden. Nature had endowed her with an exquisite taste and ear for music, which her noble lover spared no cost in cultivating. She was a favourite pupil of Giardini. Large sums of money had been offered to tempt her to sing on the stage. Her performances, in the private theatricals and oratorios at Hinchinbroke, excited never-failing admiration. Her execution of the fine air in Jephthah—"Brighter scenes I seek above," is said to have been perfection.

The tragical fate of Miss Ray is well known. Exactly six weeks after her flight with Lord Sandwich from the Admiralty to the Horse Guards, she was suddenly deprived of being by the hand of a young clergyman of the name
Apr. 9. of Hackman, who shot her through the head under the Piazza of Covent Garden, just as she was about to enter her carriage at the close of the theatrical performances. Vanity, it would seem, had formerly induced Hackman to quit a desk in a merchant's office for the more showy profession of arms. Happening, when a Lieutenant of the sixty-eighth regiment, to be in command of a recruiting party in Huntingdonshire, Lord Sandwich invited him to Hinchinbroke, where he became passionately enamoured of his future victim, whom he in vain solicited to become his wife. He now quitted the army for the church, and, having obtained the living of Wiverton in Norfolk, repeated his proposals; but, in the words of a contemporary brother-clergyman, he was unable "to bend the inflexible fair, in a black coat more than in a red."* Being unable to live with her, he felt

* The Rev. Dr. Warner: *Selwyn Corresp.*, vol. iv. pp. 67—8.

that he could not live without her. Accordingly, on the night on which the cruel catastrophe occurred, he had followed her to the theatre with the intention of destroying himself in her presence, and himself only, when, perceiving her accepting with apparent satisfaction the attentions of a young Irish barrister of the name of Macnamara, he was seized with so uncontrollable a fit of jealousy as to despatch her in the manner which has been mentioned. A second pistol-shot — which, before the bystanders had time to arrest his arm, he fired at his own head—failed to be fatal, and consequently he was left to expiate his crime on the gallows at Tyburn. Apr. 19.

The Opposition, in the mean time—intent upon involving the Government in fresh difficulties and discredit—were, in both Houses of Parliament, vehemently engaged in attacking it on a point on which it was thought to be the most vulnerable, the alleged mismanagement of naval affairs by Lord Sandwich and his brother Lords of the Admiralty. The most formidable assailant of the Administration on this occasion was Charles Fox, who in repeated motions not only charged the unpopular Earl with gross incompetency and criminal neglect, but even went so far as to move a recommendation to the King to remove him from his councils and presence for ever. However bad a man, or bad a Minister, Lord Sandwich may have been, we have evidence of the intense anguish of mind with which he had listened to the intelligence of the murder of the mother of his children, and how completely for a time that frightful domestic tragedy bowed him to the earth. Yet it was only five days after his ill-fated paramour had been laid by the side of her mother in the graveyard of the peaceful village which had given her birth,* that Fox opened upon the broken-hearted First Lord of the Admiralty as fierce a torrent of invective as was ever

* Elstree in Hertfordshire.

Apr. 19. listened to in the House of Commons. The Naval Service, he insisted, had been neglected in every one of its departments; the treasure which Parliament had voted to maintain its efficacy had been profligately squandered; the country was in a shamefully defenceless condition. Fox's motion for removing Lord Sandwich from the King's councils was negatived by a majority of two hundred and twenty one, to one hundred and eighteen.*

A gloomier year than that of 1779 has seldom dawned upon Great Britain. In America, although the war had to some extent languished, the expenditure of blood and treasure was still considerable. North of the Tweed, the wise removal of certain disabilities from the Roman Catholics had led to formidable disturbances in the cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow. In the manufacturing districts of England the introduction of Arkwright's wonderful mechanical contrivance, the cotton-frame, had occasioned no less serious riots. Ireland was in a ferment on account of the restrictions which shackled her trade. Great Britain was engaged in hostilities with her nearest and most powerful neighbour. The King was unpopular, and his Ministers were detested. But, dark as was the political horizon, still darker clouds
June 17. were gathering in the distance. Suddenly it was announced by a royal message to both Houses of Parliament that the Spanish Ambassador, the Count D'Almodovar, had delivered a manifesto to Lord Weymouth which was tantamount to a declaration of war, and had quitted the kingdom without "taking leave" of the King. Holland too, it was evident, would sooner or later become a third party in the

* Annual Register for 1779, p. 137. Whether Lord Sandwich merited half the obloquy which, at this time, was heaped upon him in and out of Parliament might be fairly perhaps called in question. Some years since, the present Earl did the author the favour to inform him that it was in contemplation to publish a defence of his great-grandfather's conduct, and, as such a work would probably be the means of making the public acquainted with many interesting unpublished papers, it is to be hoped that the intention may yet be carried into effect.

alliance against Great Britain. In this alarming state of affairs, the King, as will be seen by the following interesting letter, was the first to set an example of that admirable resolution and confidence in Providence, which never failed to distinguish him on every occasion of personal or political peril:—

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"Kew, *June 17th* 1779, ¾ pt. 11, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"I had ordered the clerk to make out as correct a list as possible of the two Divisions, as it is highly material to know how persons have acted on the most serious crisis this nation ever knew. I feel the arduousness of the task imposed on me, but that only rouses me to do my utmost to rescue my country. It is an hour that requires every exertion. Despair should never be harboured but by those who dare not examine that inward Monitor who cannot disguise the truth. Had I not seen the wicked conduct held by the Opposition, I should never have believed any man born in this island would have avoided, at such an hour, casting off every inclination but that of giving cordial support. But I own experience has made me not surprised at the transactions of this day. The papers will certainly be moved for, if the Prerogative is not soon brought into effect." *

The foregoing letter was evidently written under feelings of strong indignation at the Parliamentary conduct of the Great Whig Lords, who, instead of hastening to support the throne at so momentous a crisis of national peril, had opposed—in the House of Lords on the motion of the Duke of Richmond, and in the House of Commons at the instance of Lord John Cavendish—the loyal addresses which it was proposed to lay at the feet of the Sovereign. Others of the great Whig Lords, including the Dukes of Devonshire, Manchester, and Portland, and the Marquis of Rockingham,

* MS. Original.

not only voted against Ministers, but entered a protest against their whole conduct of the American war, and the propriety of their proroguing Parliament at the present critical time.* "The very wicked Protest," writes the King to Lord North on the 20th of June, "is proof sufficient that, whilst Parliament sits, new matter to cause general dissatisfaction is the object of Opposition."† Such, at this time, was the conduct of the leaders of that powerful party to whose tender mercies, owing to Lord North's renewed entreaties to be allowed to retire from office, the King was in hourly dread of being compelled to surrender himself. To that nobleman we again find him writing on the 16th —"Lord North's application to resign within two days of the Prorogation I can see in no other light than as a continuation of his resolution to retire whenever my affairs will permit it. For I never can think that he, who so handsomely stood forward on the desertion of the Duke of Grafton, would lose all that merit by following so undignified an example."‡

Fortunately the great mass of the people of Great Britain proved no less resolved than their Sovereign to make every effort to maintain the honour and safety of their common country. The temporary consternation, which the departure of the Spanish Ambassador had excited, very soon yielded to a warlike spirit which pervaded every class of society. The increase of difficulties, as the King justly observed in his Speech at the close of the Session, instead of dispiriting, had served to augment the courage and constancy of the nation. "We have voted unanimous addresses of lives and fortunes;" writes Lord Carlisle to
June 18. George Selwyn:—"We are in earnest and shall sell ourselves very dear, whatever may be thought at Convent St.

* Parliamentary History, vol. xx. cols. 876—895.
† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 134.
‡ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

Joseph. There are many applications for raising regiments; Lord Derby, Lord Egremont, &c. I never saw less despondency, and more spirit manifested in a difficult moment than at the present. Our common practice is to be alarmed for two or three days, and then to go to all the balls and operas as if the country was in the greatest safety."* Vast sums of money were raised by private subscriptions for the purpose of fitting out privateers and otherwise strengthening the naval and military resources of the kingdom. The East India Company with its customary munificence voted large sums for building and equipping three line of battle ships, as well as for granting bounties towards raising six thousand seamen for the supply of the fleet. Even the great Whig Lords, though they missed no opportunity of embarrassing the Government, advocated a war to the knife with the House of Bourbon. Throughout Great Britain all was fervid confidence and enthusiastic excitement. Nor were Ministers backward in providing for the defence of the country. An important Bill was brought into Parliament suspending for six months all exemptions from enlistment into the Royal Navy. Immediate measures were adopted for doubling the militia. A powerful force was despatched to man the batteries at Portsmouth. A boom was drawn across Plymouth Harbour, and orders were issued that, in the event of the enemy effecting a landing, all cattle and horses should be withdrawn from the neighbourhood of the sea-coast, into the interior of the country.

In the mean time, France and Spain had been making gigantic efforts with the double object of achieving the sovereignty of the seas, and effecting the invasion of Great Britain. A French army, consisting of about forty thousand men, was drafted into the different sea-port towns fronting the south coast of England; but it was on the water that the

* Selwyn Corresp., vol. iv. p. 198.

power of the enemy was the greatest. When, towards the end of June, Admiral Sir Charles Hardy took command of the Channel fleet it consisted of no more than thirty-eight sail of the line, whereas the French fleet alone, previously to its being joined by that of Spain, was supposed to number fifty. Yet notwithstanding this disparity, we find the King very far from approving of the cautious orders issued by the Admiralty to Sir Charles. "I trust," he writes to Lord North, "in Divine Providence, the justice of our cause, and the bravery and activity of my Navy. I wish Lord North could view it in the same light for the ease of his own mind."* In the same spirit of confidence we find him writing to another of his Ministers as follows:—

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"Kew, *June 19th* 1779, ¾ pt. 5, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"I cannot help wishing the instructions to Sir Charles Hardy left him a little more latitude. I own, if I were in his situation and received such orders, I should instantly return to Torbay. I know the zeal and excellence of the Fleet under his command. If its spirit is damped it may prevent its acting with that vigour occasions may require. Over-caution is the greatest evil we ever fall into. I do not mean by this that Sir Charles should not have the power of returning, but a few words of trusting that he will not execute his instruction further than his own judgment makes him think it absolutely necessary. I desire you will show this at your meeting." †

Unfortunately Sir Charles Hardy was destined to meet with no better success than had previously attended Keppel. When, in the month of August, the united fleets of France and Spain sailed into the British Channel they consisted of no fewer than sixty-five ships of the line, besides a swarm

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 135.
† MS. Original.

of frigates, sloops and fire-ships. Before so vastly superior a force the British Admiral was necessarily compelled to retire, leaving the enemy to menace and insult the English coast at their pleasure. Yet the little which he was able to effect did him credit. He contrived to draw away the enemy from Plymouth,* which important sea-port seems to have been in a most defenceless state, and at the same time effectually covered Spithead. Moreover, he had the good fortune to lose but one line of battle ship, the "Ardent," which accidentally fell into the enemy's hands.

In the mean time, the British military force, which had been collected to repel invasion, amounted to about fifty thousand regular troops, and about the same number of militia. This force, it is true, was numerically speaking inconsiderable, but on the other hand there had sprung up a spirit of military ardour and patriotism, in the country, which alike animated the newly-raised militia men and the veteran soldier, and from which the happiest results were anticipated. Much of this desirable enthusiasm was attributable to the example set by the King. When, in the course of the year, he visited the military camp, and reviewed his troops at Cox Heath, a spectacle is said to have presented itself which, for brilliancy and animation, had not been surpassed in England since the days of Queen Elizabeth and the Spanish Armada. "The King's magnanimity," writes Lord George Germaine to Sir Henry Clinton, "is not to be shaken by the nearness of danger."† The fact is well known, that had the enemy succeeded in landing, it was the King's intention to fight them at the head of his subjects.

* On the 20th of November the King writes to Lord North;—"I never doubted that an enquiry into the state of Plymouth, when the French appeared before that place, would be brought before Parliament. It relates to Lord Amherst and the Ordnance. If they can defend themselves I do not see any evil can arise. If they have not done their duty, it is right it should be known." *Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol. i. p. 138.

† Earl Stanhope's History of England, vol. vi. p. 407.

Happily, several circumstances concurred to detract from the otherwise formidable character of the great foreign armaments which rode in the Channel, and to accelerate their return to their own shores. The two Admirals began to quarrel among themselves. The Spanish Admiral was in favour of immediately invading England; while D'Orvilliers, on the other hand, strongly remonstrated against so bold a measure being attempted, unless preceded by the capture or destruction of the British fleet. Moreover, many of the ships in both fleets were unseaworthy. The season for the equinoctial gales was close at hand. In both fleets also a malignant fever had broken out, which, in the Spanish fleet alone, carried off three thousand seamen. Under all these circumstances the Spanish Admiral in undisguised disgust steered towards the coasts of his own country, while D'Orvilliers prepared to make the best of his way to Brest.

Great as was the satisfaction in England at the departure of the combined fleet, the year nevertheless closed amidst almost as much gloom, if not despondency, as had marked its commencement. Ireland, on the plea of defending herself against invasion, had raised a formidable army which at any time might be turned against the sister island. The Spaniards were besieging Gibraltar. In the West Indies the Islands of St. Vincent and Grenada had been wrested from British dominion. The British fleet in those waters, now under the command of Admiral Byron, had failed to obtain any advantage over that of D'Estaing. Three British ships of war had fallen into the hands of the Americans. American privateers were riding triumphantly in British waters; and, lastly, the celebrated Paul Jones, with his dreaded squadron, had not only destroyed the shipping in the harbour of Whitehaven, but had threatened and frightened the Scottish capital from its propriety.

In the mean time some important changes had taken place in the Administration. Lord Stormont had been nominated to the Secretaryship of the Northern Department, vacant by the death of Lord Suffolk; * Lord Weymouth, having resigned the Secretaryship of the Southern Department, had been succeeded by the Earl of Hillsborough; and lastly Earl Bathurst had been appointed President of the Council in the room of Earl Gower, whose altered views in regard to the wisdom of continuing the war in America had led to differences with his colleagues, and to his consequent retirement from office. Oct. 27. Nov. 24. Nov. 24.

The close of the present chapter seems to afford no unsuitable opportunity of introducing some further pleasing letters written by George the Third at, or about, this period of his life.

The King to Lord North.

(Extract.)

"3 *Novr.* 1775.

"The answer of the Empress of Russia to my letter is a clever refusal, not in so genteel a manner as I should have thought might have been expected from her. She has not had the civility to answer me in her own hand, and has thrown out some expressions that may be civil to a Russian ear, but certainly not to more civilized ones. I am anxious to know whether the Duke of Grafton, as his speeches in Parliament daily become more hostile, does not feel it to his credit to resign his employment. If not you must feel that I cannot let many days more elapse before I send for his Seal." †

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* Henry Howard, twelfth Earl of Suffolk, K.G., died 6 March 1779, at the age of forty, bequeathing his dormant titles and honours to an only and posthumous child, who, though he survived his birth only forty-eight hours, is nevertheless dignified in the peerages as Henry, sixth Earl of Berkshire and thirteenth Earl of Suffolk.

† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 92. The Duke of Grafton resigned on the following day when the King had the satisfaction of delivering the Privy Seal to his friend Lord Dartmouth. "I place no small glory," he writes to Lord North on the 27th of May following, "in being convinced that I am cordially loved by that good man." *Ibid.*, p. 96.

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *28th Novr.* 1775, $\frac{m}{12}$ p. 7, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"The account of the shipwreck of one of the Hanoverian transports being confirmed, and that all the officers are lost, has occasioned my ordering Count Fauke to go immediately to the Isle of Rhé to see the poor soldiers taken care of, and to put them into a condition to proceed in the ship ordered by the Admiralty to Gibraltar. I desire you will write a letter of introduction to Lord Stormont who must get him a passport to go to Rochelle, and whose assistance may perhaps be necessary during the continuance of the men in that Kingdom. He means to set off tomorrow morning." *

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *Jany. 15th* 1776, $\frac{m}{17}$ pt. 4, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"There cannot be the smallest doubt of the justice of the sentence found against Robert Perreau; † therefore the enclosed petition will not induce me to mitigate the sentence.

"John Davies may have a respite." ‡

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *Feb. 4th* 1776, $\frac{m}{9}$ p. 5, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"I send the letter from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland § in the private box, that it may be immediately delivered to you. The alteration he proposes can neither render the Bill less nor more foolish than in its former mode; but as he alleges it will pass the House of Commons in this form, I desire you will this night despatch a messenger with permission for his having it introduced with this alteration.

"I cannot conclude without expressing my idea that from his stay in Ireland he has acquired some of the agreeable accomplishments of that Island—the making *bulls*. For his proposing the change shows that the difficulty from the first has arisen from the Castle, and not from the House of Parliament." ‖

* MS. Original.

† Robert Perreau was executed two days after the date of this note, (January 17,) for forgery.

‡ MS. Original. § Earl Harcourt. ‖ MS. Original.

The King to Lord North.

(Extract.)

"29 *March* 1776.

"I cannot but express my astonishment at Lord Harcourt's presumption in telling Lord Drogheda there would be no difficulty in making him an Irish Marquis.* I refused to make Irish Marquises to Lord Hertford and Lord Townshend. I desire I may hear no more of Irish Marquises. I feel for English Earls and do not choose to disgust them." †

The King to Lord North.

(Extract.)

"15 *Novr.* 1776.

"I had learnt from Lord Weymouth that Charles Fox had declared at Arthur's last night that he should attend the House this day, and then set off to Paris and not return till after the Recess. Bring as much [business] forward as you can before the Recess, as real business is never so well considered as when the attention of the House is not taken up by noisy declamation." ‡

The King to Lord North.

(Extract.)

"31 *May* 1777.

"Lord Chatham's motion § can have no other use but to convey some fresh fuel to the Rebels. Like most of the other productions of that extraordinary brain, it contains nothing but specious words and malevolence." ‖

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* Charles Moore, sixth Earl of Drogheda, was created an Irish Marquis in 1801. He married Anne, daughter of Francis first Marquis of Hertford, and died 22 December 1821.

† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 94. Lords Townshend and Hertford were afterwards severally created English Marquises; the former in 1786 and the latter in 1793.

‡ Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 96.

§ The King alludes to the motion brought forward by Lord Chatham on the 30th of May for putting a stop to hostilities with America. It was lost by a majority of 99 to 28. See *ante*, pp. 162—165.

‖ Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 98.

The King to Lord North.

(Extract.)

"19 *Sept.* 1777.

"Having paid the last arrears on the Civil List I must now do the same for you. I have understood by your hints that you have been in debt ever since you settled in life. I must therefore insist that you allow me to assist you with ten thousand, fifteen thousand, or even twenty thousand pounds, if that will be sufficient. It is easy for you to make an arrangement and at proper times to take up that sum. You know me very ill if you don't think that of all the letters I ever wrote to you this one gives me the greatest pleasure; and I want no other return but your being convinced that I love you as well as a man of worth, as I esteem you as a Minister. Your conduct at a critical moment I never can forget." *

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"KEW, *June* 1*st* 1778, $\frac{3}{4}$ p. 8, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"The account you gave me yesterday left no room for a different report from you than that I have just received. I shall in consequence tomorrow write to Lord North.

"I did not expect you would get any information from the Bishop of Salisbury,† who seemed to me always ignorant of the common forms of the Order. I should think the shortest mode would be to send the book of statutes privately to the Attorney General, and put this plain question to him, what mode appears to him most proper for the Sovereign's making any new statute agreeable to the mode used on former occasions.

"I think the Attorney General is more judicious in taking the name of a town in Norfolk, than taking his own name.‡

"Your conduct concerning the riot in Suffolk is very proper."

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* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 99.

† Dr. John Hume, translated from the See of Oxford. The Chancellorship of the Order of the Garter is attached to the Bishopric of Salisbury.

‡ Edward Thurlow was created Baron Thurlow of Ashfield in the county of Suffolk, 3 June 1778, on his succeeding Lord Apsley as Lord Chancellor.

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"KEW, *June 7th* 1778, $\frac{m}{7}$ pt. 6, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"The enclosed is all the information I have been able to collect out of Ashmole;* in consequence of which I have drawn up the following very rough sketch of an additional statute, which I desire you will peruse and get the Chancellor, as he has promised you, to draw up one in handsome and rather high flowing expressions." †

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *March 23rd* 1779, $\frac{m}{14}$ p. 8, A.M.

"Lord Weymouth will order the Ensigns of the Order of the Bath to be sent, by the messenger the East India Company is sending concerning the demolition of the fortifications of Pondicherry, to Colonel Munro and follow the same precedent for Investiture established when Sir John Lindsay got the Order.‡ As well as I recollect, the Nabob was desired to perform the ceremony. The books in the office will of course contain the proceeding." §

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *April 3rd* 1779, $\frac{m}{18}$ pt. 6, P.M.

"This day I have read Sir Joseph Yorke's ‖ private letter to Lord Weymouth, and its enclosure; which has greatly confirmed an opinion which I had formed of the necessity of something from hence to counteract the present current in Holland,

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* "History of the Order of the Garter," by Elias Ashmole.

† MS. Original.

‡ Sir Hector Munro and Sir John Lindsay were severally invested as Knight Commanders of the Bath by the Nabob of Arcot, the former in 1779, and the latter 11 March, 1771. *Townsend's Calendar of Knights*, pp. 167, 169.

§ MS. Original.

‖ General Sir Joseph Yorke, K.B., created Baron Dover in 1788, was employed as Envoy Extraordinary and Ambassador at the Hague from November 1751 to December 1780. He died 2 December 1792, when the Barony became extinct.

arising from French intrigue and Dutch private interest. I should have mentioned it sooner, had I been able to propose any specific step. I see the necessity of something, but cannot exactly say what. But I am convinced that if the Dutch are not pretty clearly taught that convoys must not be a cover to naval stores, the mercantile interest will not be prevented from carrying materials to the enemy, without which the War cannot be by them sustained. I trust Lord Weymouth will thoroughly consider this knotty affair, and see whether he cannot propose some mode which may alarm those members of the Republic who are enemies to this country and to the Stadtholder, and consequently strengthen the arguments of the friends of England and of the Prince of Orange."

The King to Lord North.

(Extract.)

"11 *June* 1779.

"No man in my dominions desires solid peace more than I do. But no inclination to get out of the present difficulties, which certainly keep my mind very far from a state of ease, can incline me to enter into the destruction of the Empire. Lord North frequently says that the advantages to be gained by this contest [with America] never could repay the expense. I own that any war, be it ever so successful, if a person will sit down and weigh the expense, they will find, as in the last, that it has impoverished the State enriched; but this is only weighing such points in the scale of a tradesman behind his counter. It is necessary for those whom Providence has placed in my station to weigh what expenses, though very great, are not sometimes necessary to prevent what would be more ruinous than any loss of money. The present contests with America I cannot help seeing as the most serious in which any country was ever engaged. It contains such a train of consequences that they must be examined to feel its real weight. Whether the laying a tax was deserving all the evils that have arisen from it I should suppose no man could allege without being thought fitter for Bedlam than a seat in the Senate; but step by step the demands of America have risen. Independence is their object, which every man, not willing to sacrifice every object to a momentary and inglorious Peace, must

concur with me in thinking this country can never submit to. Should America succeed in that, the West Indies must follow, not in independence, but for their own interest they must become dependent on America. Ireland would soon follow, and this Island, reduced to itself, would be a poor Island indeed." *

The King to Lord North.

(Extract.)

"22 *June* 1779.

"The Papers from America show that, had not Spain thrown off the mask, we should soon have seen the Colonies sue for pardon from the Mother Country. I do not yet despair that, with Clinton's activity and the Indians in their rear, the Provinces will soon now submit.

"It is no compliment when I say that Lord Gower would be a poor substitute for Lord North. I cannot approve of such a measure. What I said yesterday was the dictate of frequent and severe self-examination. I never can depart from it. Before I hear of any man's readiness to come into office, I will expect to see it signed under his hand that he is resolved to keep the Empire entire, and that no troops shall consequently be withdrawn from thence, nor Independence ever allowed." †

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"Kew, *August 6th* 1779, $\frac{m}{11}$ pt. 5, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Having learned from Lord North that he must attend a meeting in Kent on Wednesday, I mean to absent myself from St. James's, as I should have so little business that day. I therefore desire the Recorder's report may be postponed till Friday, when I shall hope to see Lord Weymouth." ‡

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* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 132.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 134. ‡ MS. Original.

The King to Viscount Weymouth.

"KEW, *Oct.* 21*st* 1779, ½ pt. 7, P.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"You will bring the Seals of the Northern Office to-morrow, that I may deliver them unto Lord Stormont; and you will order a Privy Council that he may be sworn. I cannot conclude without thanking you for having so patiently held the Seals of both Departments, and expressing my pleasure at having at last found you a colleague, whose abilities and temper will, I trust, be agreeable to you." *

It should be mentioned, that towards the end of the year 1779, in consequence of Lord North renewing his earnest entreaties to be allowed to escape from the cares of office, the King at length gave a reluctant consent to his making arrangements with that object. "I can state my sentiments,"
Nov. 30. he writes to his favourite Minister, "in three words. I wish Lord North to continue, but if he is resolved to retire he must understand that step, though thought necessary by him, is very unpleasant to me." † Accordingly, through the medium of the new Lord Chancellor, overtures were made to Lords Camden and Shelburne, inviting them to unite with the King's present Ministers in forming a strong Coalition Administration. These overtures, however, were not only scouted by the Whig Lords, but the language in which their refusal was couched appears to have given deep
Dec. 18. offence to the King. "I was able," he writes to the

* MS. Original. See *ante*, p. 249. "This, or something else, was not agreeable to Lord Weymouth, who almost immediately and unexpectedly resigned." *MS. note by Mr. Croker.* "Lord Stormont," writes Walpole to Mann on the 31st of October, "has got the late Lord Suffolk's Seals of Secretary. There were to have been other arrangements, but they are suspended; and it is said this new preferment is more likely to produce negotiations than settlements." *Walpole's Letters*, vol. 7, p. 206, Ed. 1858. Again, Walpole writes to Mann on the 28th of the following month that "a crash has happened in the Administration by the resignations of Lord Gower and Lord Weymouth, which at least implied apprehension in them that the edifice was falling." *Ibid., p.* 282.

† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 138.

Chancellor, "to obtain no other answer than that a Coalition seemed not to answer their views. From the cold disdain with which I am treated, it is evident to me what treatment I am to expect from Opposition, if I was to call them now into my service. To obtain their support I must deliver up my person, my principles, and my dominions, into their hands." * With reference, however, to this passage, it is but fair to the Opposition Lords to mention that the curt language in which they appear to have replied to the Chancellor's communication was never intended by them to be repeated literally to their Sovereign. "I find," writes Dec. 26. Thurlow, "that I have had the misfortune to mislead your Majesty into a false impression of some considerable men." And he adds—"They never imagined that they were returning an answer to your Majesty." † Under all the circumstances Lord North appears to have felt it his bounden duty to remain in office.

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 140.
† *Ibid.*, p. 141.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Debates in Parliament on Economical Reform—Speech of Edmund Burke—Debate on the Limitation of the Power of the Crown—Motion on the Right of Parliament to regulate the Civil List—Conflict of Parties—The "Gordon Riots"—The Mob predominant—Fearful Devastation in the Metropolis—Burning of Newgate and the Fleet Prisons and other buildings—Promptitude of the King—Suppression of the Disturbances—The Rioters brought to trial.

SELDOM have more interesting or more animated debates been listened to within the walls of St. Stephen's, than those which took place after the Christmas recess of 1779 and 1780. It was on the 8th of February that Sir George Savile presented to the House of Commons the famous "Yorkshire petition," signed by no fewer than eight thousand freeholders of that important county. In this document the petitioners entreated the House to enquire into the management and expenditure of the public money; to reduce all exorbitant emoluments, and to abolish all sinecure places and unmerited pensions whatsoever. Only three days after the presentation of the "Yorkshire petition," Burke brought before the House his celebrated plan of Economical Reform; the specific objects of which were the reduction of the national expenditure, and a diminution of the influence of the Crown. That noxious influence, said the illustrious orator, had not only taken away all vigour from our arms, and all wisdom from our counsels, but had stripped every shadow of authority and credit from the most venerable parts of the Constitution. Burke's speech on this occasion is said to have been grand almost

beyond precedent; indeed, Lord North, in replying to him, admitted it to have been one of the best orations to which he had ever listened. It was a speech, he said, "such as no other member could have made." In conducting his favourite measure through Parliament, Burke, on more than one occasion, succeeded in leaving Ministers in a minority, but eventually the Bill was lost.

No less animated were the discussions which took place not long afterwards, when Dunning brought forward a similar, and still bolder, motion for enforcing a more economical expenditure of the public money, and curbing the power of the Crown. In a speech, concise, eloquent, and breathing bitter invective against Ministers, he accused them of having jesuitically approved of many of the propositions of his honourable friend, at the same time that they were insidiously intent on stripping it of all its excellence. The public, he said, must be satisfied there was at issue a point of the most vital importance; and accordingly he moved in a Committee of the whole House his famous Resolution—"That it is the opinion of this Committee that the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished." To the consternation of the courtiers and place-hunters, this sweeping proposition was carried by a majority of eighteen.

Encouraged by this success, Dunning now moved a second resolution to the effect that it was not less competent for the House of Commons to correct abuses in the management and expenditure of the Civil List, than it was in every other branch of the legislature. This resolution was carried against Government; as also were one or two others proposed by Charles Fox and Mr. Thomas Pitt. Thus, throughout the Session, was the House constantly kept in a state of the highest excitement. Thus too were the downfall of Ministers, and the unconditional surrender of the King, apparently on the eve of being accomplished, when

the illness of the Speaker, Sir Fletcher Norton, compelled the House to adjourn from the 14th to the 24th of April.
Apr. 14. "I have not the slightest doubt," writes the King to Lord North, "that the Speaker has pleaded illness, to enable the Opposition to pursue their amusement at Newmarket the next week." * Unfortunately, when the House of Commons reassembled on the 24th, its temper proved to be changed. It was in vain that Dunning moved an Address to the King praying him not to dissolve Parliament or prorogue the Session, till after the crying evils complained of had been remedied. Ministers collected all their forces to meet his attack, and triumphed by a majority of fifty-one.

That the King, at this exciting period, should have taught himself to believe that the radical Resolutions moved by the Opposition, and their violent attacks upon the royal prerogative, were fraught with peril to the State, was nothing more than might have been anticipated. His fears, indeed, however unreasonable they may have been, were certainly shared by the great majority of the wisest and best in the land. "A little time," writes the King to Lord North, "will open the eyes of several who have been led farther than they intended. It cannot be the wish of the majority to overturn the Constitution. Factious leaders and ruined men wish it, but not the bulk of the People. I shall therefore undoubtedly be assisted in preserving this excellent Constititution. Lord North shall see that there is at least one person willing to preserve unspoiled the most beautiful Constitution that ever was framed." † The personal attacks levelled at himself in Parliament he could not but bitterly feel. To Lord North he writes on the 7th of April—"The Resolutions can by no means be looked on as personal to him. [Lord North.] I wish I did not feel

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol i. p. 145.
† *Ibid.*, pp. 144—5.

at whom they were personally levelled." * Again the king writes to Lord North;—"However I am treated, I must love this country." † Mar. 9.

In the month of June, this year, took place in London those formidable popular disturbances familiarly known as the "Gordon Riots." About two years previously, certain Acts of Parliament, which had long weighed heavily upon the Roman Catholics of England and Wales, had been gracefully repealed by the unanimous acquiescence of the King and both Houses of Parliament. Wise and liberal minds had begun to congratulate themselves on the approaching dawn of a more enlightened and tolerant age. Very different, however, was the state of public feeling on the other side of the Tweed. No sooner was it rumoured in Scotland that Government contemplated introducing a similar Relief Bill into that country, than there burst forth a storm of fanatical indignation and alarm, such as had not been equalled since John Knox had declared that a single Mass was more frightful to him than the invasion of an army. In Edinburgh and Glasgow, not only were Roman Catholics grossly insulted in the streets, but they went about their daily business in peril of their lives. Their places of worship were demolished; their dwelling-houses broken into; and their property destroyed. Unhappily, this miserable spirit of bigotry gradually extended to England. There, too, the cry of "No Popery" was as effectually raised, and thus sprang into existence that mischievous society, destined to be the cause of so many evils, the Protestant Association. However well-intentioned may have been the members of that Institution, it seems to have been mainly composed of persons whose want of knowledge of human nature, and of the danger of inflaming the passions of large and

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 144.

† *Ibid.*, p. 143.

crowded populations, was exceeded only by the exaggerated notions they entertained of their own individual importance.* Moreover, the choice which they made of a President, could scarcely have been a more unfortunate one. Lord George Gordon, third son of Cosmo, Duke of Gordon, was a young man of ordinary abilities, of weak judgment, and of questionable sanity. As far as any opinion can be formed of his character, it seems to have been a singular compound of enthusiasm, ambition, and buffoonery, not without a taint of knavery. Although this "lunatic apostle," as Walpole styles him, affected the garb and aspect of the Methodists—wearing his hair long and lank down his shoulders—his private life appears to have been far from an immaculate one. According to Hannah More he was a man of "loose morals," † and, according to Walpole, "very debauched." ‡ As yet, he was principally known to the world as a very tiresome speaker in the House of Commons, and occasionally as a very inflammatory one. At times, his language in the House was of that seditious character which only insanity could excuse. The time was at hand, he exclaimed on one occasion, when he would dictate both to the Crown and to Parliament. The King of England was a Papist. Let his Majesty dare to depart from his Coronation-oath and his head should fall on the scaffold. "Lord George Gordon," writes Lord Carlisle to George Selwyn in May

* "I congratulate you," writes Cowper, the poet, to his well-meaning friend, the Reverend John Newton, "upon the wisdom that withheld you from entering yourself a member of the Protestant Association. Your friends, who did so, have reason enough to regret their doing it, even though they should never be called upon. Innocent as they are, and those who know them cannot doubt of their being perfectly so, it is likely to bring an odium on the profession they make, that will not soon be forgotten. Neither is it possible for a quiet, inoffensive man to discover, on a sudden, that his zeal has carried him into such company, without being to the last degree shocked at his imprudence." *Hayley's Life of Cowper*, p. 77. Ed. 1835.

† Memoirs of Hannah More, vol. i. p. 199.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 332.

1779, "made a speech, for which he ought to be shut up, upon the state of Scotland. He wept several times in his speech; produced an old print of the Marquis of Huntley; offered to make Lord North a present of it, and called upon twenty members by their names." *

Such was the weak, yet dangerous fanatic, under whose auspices, on the 29th of May, a large and excited meeting of the members of the Protestant Association, took place in Coachmakers' Hall, near Foster Lane, Cheapside. The principal object of the meeting was to deliberate on the most advisable mode of laying before the House of Commons an enormous petition, to which, in Walpole's words, was appended a "volume of names." The foremost orator, on the occasion, was Lord George Gordon, then in his twenty-ninth year. He was ready and willing, he told his partisans, to present their petition to Parliament, but he would present it only on the express condition that not less than twenty thousand men accompanied him in procession to Westminster. He then moved, and carried, a Resolution that, on Friday the 2nd of June, the friends of Protestantism should assemble in St. George's Fields, Southwark, and that, in order to distinguish friend from foe, each should wear a blue cockade in his hat, and also that blue banners, bearing the words "No Popery," should be carried in the procession.

Accordingly, on the appointed day in St. George's Fields —on the very spot on which, according to a vague tradition, now stands the high altar of the largest Roman Catholic church which has been erected in England since the Reformation—Lord George issued his final directions to the

* Selwyn Corresp., vol. iv. p. 120. Lord George was Selwyn's nominee for the borough of Ludgershall. "You ask about Mr. Selwyn," writes Horace Walpole to Lady Ossory on the 6th of June 1780;—"Have you heard his incomparable reply to Lord George Gordon, who asked him whether he would return him again for Ludgershall? He replied—'His constituents would not.'—'Oh, yes; if you would recommend me, they would choose me if I came from the coast of Africa.'—'That is according to what part of the coast you came from. They certainly would if you came from the *Guinea coast*.'" *Walpole's Letters*, vol. vii. p. 384.

vast mass of zealots who were assembled there at his bidding. After having separated into three different bodies, and advanced by three different routes to Westminster, they re-assembled, at about half-past two o'clock in the afternoon, in the large open space in front of the houses of Parliament. Gibbon, the historian, then a member of the House of Commons, describes the scene as if "forty thousand Puritans, such as they might have been in the days of Cromwell, had started out of their graves."* During their progress to Westminster, the conduct of the petitioners had been commendably orderly and decorous. No sooner, however, did one unpopular Member of Parliament after another, make their appearance in Old Palace Yard, than, not content with greeting them with groans and hisses, they manifested an unmistakable tendency to resort to more lawless proceedings. Curiously enough, at the very time when these "pious ragamuffins," as Walpole designates them, were doing their utmost, by their rampant bigotry and disorderly conduct, to damage the great cause of Parliamentary Reform, one of the great Whig Lords, the Duke of Richmond, was actually on his legs in the House of Lords, delivering a party speech in favour of the rights of the people, of annual Parliaments, and universal suffrage.†

In the mean time, the behaviour of the populace had increased from uproar to actual violence. Not satisfied with stopping the carriages of the members of the legisla-

* Misc. Works, p. 299. Ed. 1837.

† See the Duke's Speech on this occasion in the Parliamentary History, vol. xxi. cols. 664—668. On the 5th of the preceding month of August, at the time when the invasion of England by the forces of France and Spain appeared to be imminent, we find the King writing to Lord North—"In my opinion it will be highly dangerous to continue the Duke of Richmond Lord Lieutenant of Sussex." And the King adds in the same letter—"Some may talk of prudential measures; but it is not safe to let the Duke of Richmond be in executive office with his disposition to clog the wheels of Government, and, if he has an opportunity, to encourage insurrection." *Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol. i. p. 136.

ture, with forcing them to cry "No Popery" and wear the blue cockade, they subjected those who were obnoxious to them to the grossest indignities. The Peers suffered far more than the Commons. Lord Ashburnham was dragged out of his chariot. Lords Townshend and Hillsborough were so roughly handled, that, when they entered the House of Lords, it was with their bags torn off, leaving their hair hanging dishevelled about their ears. Lord Willoughby entered without his periwig; Lord Stormont was assaulted, ill-treated, and had his carriage broken in pieces. The Lord President of the Council, Lord Bathurst, had his legs violently kicked, and was forcibly pushed about by the mob. Lord Mansfield had the glasses and panels of his carriage broken, and narrowly escaped with his life. The Archbishop of York, Dr. Markham, in the midst of a storm of hisses and groans, had his lawn sleeves torn off and flung in his face. Just when the Duke of Richmond was insisting that "every man in the kingdom of full age, and not disqualified by law," was entitled to be represented in Parliament, his Grace was interrupted by Lord Mountfort hurriedly entering, and informing the House that Lord Boston had been dragged from his coach and thrown on the ground, and that at that very moment the noble lord was in imminent danger of being trampled to death by the mob.* Lastly, the life of the Bishop of Lincoln, brother of Lord Chancellor Thurlow, would in all likelihood have been sacrificed but for the gallantry of a young law-student, who succeeded in rescuing and lodging him, in a fainting state, in a neighbouring house, over the leads of which, the Bishop, disguised in female attire, subsequently effected his escape to a place of safety. Mar. 8.

Never, indeed, since Colonel Blood had carried off the

* Parl. Hist., vol. xxi. cols. 668–9.

Duke of Ormond, opposite to the palace of his sovereign, with the intention of hanging him at Tyburn, had such gross indignities been offered to the British Peerage. As bishop after bishop entered the House of Lords with his lawn sleeves torn, and peer after peer with his hair hanging loose and his clothes covered with hair-powder, the scene grew more and more indecorous. "It is hardly possible," we are told, "to conceive a more grotesque appearance than the House exhibited. Some of their Lordships with their hair about their shoulders; others smutted with dirt; most of them as pale as the ghost in Hamlet, and all of them standing up in their several places, and speaking at the same instant. One Lord proposing to send for the Guards; another for the Justices or Civil Magistrates; many crying out 'Adjourn! Adjourn!' while the skies resounded with the huzzas, shoutings, or hootings and hisses, in Palace Yard."* "Great tameness," according to Dr. Johnson, was displayed both "by Lords and Commons." † One Spiritual Lord, indeed, the Archbishop of York, on learning that Lord Mansfield was in the hands of the mob, rushed down stairs, flung himself among the crowd, and carried off his friend in triumph.‡ Lord Townshend also, when it was intimated that Lord Boston was in imminent peril, chivalrously suggested that the younger peers should draw their swords and sally forth to his rescue. On the other hand, all the Duke of Richmond's sympathies would seem to have been still with his lawless friends out of doors. "If their Lordships," he suggested, "went as a House," would it not be as well that they should be preceded by the noble Lord on the Woolsack, with the mace carried before him? § While the Peers were thus discussing what was best to be done,

* Parl. Hist., vol. xxi. col. 669.

† Croker's Boswell's Life of Johnson, p. 647, Edition 1848.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 384; Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 403.

§ Parl. Hist., vol. xxi. col. 669, note.

Lord Boston himself, exhibiting marks of scandalous ill-treatment—having narrowly escaped having the sign of the Cross cut upon his forehead—entered the House. During this exciting time, Lord Mansfield, who was presiding as Lord Chancellor during the indisposition of Thurlow, is described as sitting on the Woolsack trembling like an aspen-leaf. *

The House of Commons presented a scarcely less extraordinary scene than the House of Lords. Its members, it is true, had been less roughly treated on their way to Westminster than those of the Upper House, but their condition had become the more critical of the two. All the anxiety of the pious portion of the multitude was centred in the reception which their huge petition was likely to meet with in the Lower House, and accordingly they not only blockaded every approach to the House, but the staircase and lobby were in possession of a dense body of infuriated enthusiasts, whose cries of "No Popery! no Popery!" drowned the voices of the speakers within, and whose violent attitude threatened every moment the most calamitous consequences. So immediate, indeed, appeared to be the peril, that it was proposed by several members to fling open the doors, and fight their way, sword in hand, through the crowd. Meanwhile, the contemptible cause of this unseemly turmoil was to be seen rushing to and fro; at one moment exasperating the zealots in the lobby by acquainting them with the name of the member who happened to be speaking against their cause, and, at another moment, flying to the open windows, and addressing equally inflammatory language to the rabble below. It was to no purpose that General Conway "reprimanded him soundly in public and private;" † to no purpose that his kinsman, Colonel Murray, an uncle of the Duke of Athol, told him that he was a disgrace to his family; that

* Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 376.
† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 404.

Colonel Holroyd, afterwards Lord Sheffield, intimated to him that the fittest place for him was Bedlam; or that the good-natured Prime Minister endeavoured to pacify and argue him into reason. If he liked, he told Lord North, he could have him torn to pieces by the mob.* Happily, as the noise of the crowd, thundering at the doors, became louder, and the peril more and more imminent, two Members, Colonels Gordon and Holroyd, took upon themselves the responsibility of restraining the mischievous fanatic. "My Lord George," said the former, "do you intend to bring your rascally adherents into the House of Commons? If you do I will plunge my sword, not into the body of the first man that enters, but into yours."† Colonel Holroyd even went so far as to refuse to quit his side, and, by following him whenever he moved towards the gallery, effectually prevented his making any further appeals to the mob. By this time, a detachment of the Guards, and a party of Light Horse, which had been privately sent for by Lord North, had made their appearance, and having been drawn up in formidable array in Palace Yard, were the means of inducing the multitude to disperse without any further attempt at riot. At a later hour in the day, Lord George, worn out by his exertions in the cause of intolerance and disorder, was to be seen throwing himself, half asleep, into a chair in the deserted refreshment-room of the House of Commons.‡ That he had all along been aware of the danger to which he was likely to expose society, there cannot be a doubt. He had even had the effrontery, in one of the four private audiences which the King had been good-natured enough to grant him, to warn his Sovereign of the probable consequences of Parliament rejecting the prayer of the petitioners. "Certainly," writes his

* Walpole's Corresp., vol. vii. p. 381.
† Annual Register for 1780, p. 258; Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 404.
‡ State Trials, vol. xxi. p. 525.

Majesty to Lord North, "Lord George Gordon, in his conversations with me, said nothing that could exculpate him. He said if the restrictions on the Roman Catholics, taken off by Parliament, were not repealed, that the Petitioners would by force right themselves. He, after that, calls the meeting in St. George's Fields, and heads them. This does not clear him, but in reality adds to his guilt." *

In the mean time, although the vast multitude had taken their departure from the precincts of Parliament, it was unhappily not in the direction of their homes nor of their places of worship. Before night, the chapel of the Sardinian Minister in Duke Street, Lincoln's Inn, and that of the Bavarian Minister in Warwick Street, Golden Square, had been ransacked, set fire to, and half-demolished. The following day, Saturday the third of June, passed off in tolerable quiet, yet it proved to be only a lull before the storm. The next day, which happened to be the King's birthday, large parties of zealots, accompanied by a more than corresponding number of pickpockets, burglars, and other disorderly and dangerous persons, dispersed themselves in different directions, for the purpose of attacking and destroying the private residences and places of worship of the Roman Catholics. On this day, the principal scenes of devastation were Moorfields and its neighbourhood, where, after having completed their work of destruction, the rioters piled in one huge heap, not only the furniture and goods of private individuals, but pulpits, pews, and altars, upon which they flung the vestments of the priests and the sacred symbols of their faith, and then committed the whole to the flames amidst the wildest shouts of derision and fury. On the following day, the 5th, similar atrocious outrages were perpetrated in Wapping and East Smithfield; while, in the West of London, the residence of Sir George

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 155.

Savile in Leicester Square, and other private houses, were attacked and ransacked with like fury and impunity.*

The rabble being by this time completely masters of the metropolis, proceeded to still graver and more daring acts of violence. "I was at Westminster," writes Crabbe the poet, on Tuesday the 6th, "at about three o'clock in the afternoon, and saw the members go to the House. The mob stopped many persons, but let all whom I saw pass, excepting Lord Sandwich, whom they treated roughly, broke his coach-windows, cut his face, and turned him back. A guard of horse and foot were immediately sent for, who did no particular service, the mob increasing, and defeating them."† From Westminster the poet proceeded to Newgate, where he arrived at a critical moment when the mob, having broken into the house of Akerman, the keeper of the prison, were engaged in throwing his furniture out of the windows and setting fire to the building. The next object of attack was the prison itself, the massive gates of which were forthwith assailed by a strong body of the rioters, provided with pickaxes and crowbars. The fire had by this time extended to the chapel of the prison, situated close to the part of the building in which the prisoners were confined, whose screams, as the glare from the flames lighted up their several cells, threatening them with an instant and dreadful death, are said to have been terrible to hear. Those

* Annual Register for 1780, pp. 259, 260. Among other houses attacked was that of Lord Bute, in whose hands, in the absurd opinion of half England, the King was still a puppet. On the 27th of June the Earl writes from London to John Home, the author of "Douglas";—"The troops once gone, I look upon the fate of my house as determined. Indeed, nothing but my son Charles, with forty of the Royals, saved it on the Thursday [the 8th]; I fear they may destroy it when they please. Twenty men left at Luton would have secured me, for a mob cannot come from London without its being known, but eight or ten villains may do here what they please. Charles is to send me arms, but his account of the servants left in town renders them useless; for he says, except Peter, they are all sneaking cowards." *Life of Home by Henry Mackenzie: Home's Works*, vol. i. p. 153.

† Life of Crabbe by his Son; vol. i. 81. "Lord Sandwich," writes Walpole, "was torn out of his chariot that morning and had his face cut, and was saved only by the Horse Guards who carried him home." *Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 407.

appalling sounds of agony naturally redoubled the exertions of the attacking party, and accordingly a number of them, having succeeded in descending from the roof of the Governor's house into the prison yard, set themselves so energetically to work to release their terrified fellow-creatures, that in their fury they are said to have torn away stones two or three tons in weight, to which the doors of the prisoners' cells were fastened. "They broke the roof," writes Crabbe, "tore away the rafters, and, having got ladders, they descended. Not Orpheus himself had more courage, or better luck. Flames all around them, and a body of soldiers expected, they defied and laughed at all opposition. The prisoners escaped. I stood and saw about twelve women and eight men ascend from their confinement to the open air, and they were conducted through the street in their chains. Three of these were to be hanged on Friday. You have no conception of the frenzy of the multitude. This being done, and Akerman's house now a mere shell of brickwork, they kept a store of flame there for other purposes. It became red-hot, and the doors and windows appeared like the entrance to so many volcanoes. With some difficulty they then fired the debtors' prison, broke the doors, and they too all made their escape." * On the following day, another and more celebrated literary man visited the scene of havoc. "I walked with Dr. Scott," writes Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, "to look at Newgate, and found it in ruins, with the fire yet glowing. As I went by, the Protestants were plundering the sessions-house at the Old Bailey. There were not, I believe, a hundred; but they did their work at leisure, in full security, without sentinels, without trepidation, as men lawfully employed in full day. Such is the cowardice of a commercial place!" †

* Life of Crabbe by his Son, vol. i. pp. 83—4. In all, three hundred prisoners are said to have been let loose from Newgate. *Annual Register for* 1780, p. 260.

† Croker's Boswell's Life of Johnson, p. 648. Ed. 1848.

But the terrors of the day had not concluded with the demolition of Newgate. From thence, the multitude proceeded to Bloomsbury Square, at the north-east corner of which stood the stately mansion of Lord Mansfield, whose recent support of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill rendered him especially obnoxious to the fanatical portion of the mob. Scarcely had the venerable Earl and his Countess had time to escape by a back entrance, before his house was attacked by a yelling and infuriated rabble, who forthwith ransacked it, and set it on fire. Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, whom curiosity led to the spot, has graphically described the scene in his Memoirs. "Having got into a hackney-coach, we drove first to Bloomsbury Square, attracted to that spot by a rumour generally spread that Lord Mansfield's residence, situate at the north-east corner, was either already burnt or destined for destruction. Hart Street and Great Russell Street presented each to the view, as we passed, large fires composed of furniture taken from the houses of magistrates, or other obnoxious individuals. Quitting the coach, we crossed the square, and had scarcely got under the wall of Bedford House, when we heard the door of Lord Mansfield's house burst open with violence. In a few minutes, all the contents of the apartments being precipitated from the windows, were piled up, and wrapt in flames. A file of foot-soldiers arriving, drew up near the blazing pile, but without either attempting to quench the fire, or to impede the mob, who were indeed far too numerous to admit of being dispersed, or even intimidated, by a small detachment of Infantry."* It was not a little to the credit of the rioters, that of all the costly and valuable property which, on this occasion, fell into their hands, not an article was allowed to be carried off as booty. Their object, said the incendiaries, was not plunder but the

* Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. i. pp. 335—6, 3rd edition.

defence of principle.* Still more creditable was it to the rioters of 1780, that notwithstanding the fierce passions by which many of them were impelled, and the long period during which they were masters of the metropolis, not a single life was sacrificed either to popular fury, or to the rage for plunder.†

The destruction of Lord Mansfield's mansion may be said to have been a national calamity. In addition to a noble collection of books, many of them rendered priceless by containing the handwriting of Bolingbroke and Pope, there perished in that cruel conflagration the correspondence, which—since the days when Pope had celebrated him as—

> "Noble and young, who strikes the heart
> With every sprightly, every decent part"—‡

the illustrious lawyer had maintained with contemporary philosophers, statesmen, and poets; many of them luminaries of an almost Augustan Age. On that occasion also is said to have perished, that which the printer's art would probably have otherwise rendered imperishable, his priceless memoirs of his own life and times; a work doubtless rich in the experiences of a long political and literary career; rich in elucidations of disputed points in contemporary histories; rich in pleasant memories of the past; in graceful and classical gossip; in wit, anecdote, and wisdom. The sad loss, which was thus inflicted on the public, was bemoaned by the poet Cowper in complimentary verse of no contemptible merit: §—

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* Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chief Justices, vol. ii. p. 524.
† Aikin's Annals of George 3, vol. i. p. 263.
‡ Imitations of Horace, Book 4, Ode 1.

> "Namque et nobilis et decens,
> Et pro solicitis non tacitus reis,
> Et centum puer artium."

§ "On the Burning of Lord Mansfield's Library, together with his MSS."

"And Murray sighs o'er Pope and Swift,
And many a treasure more,
The well-judged purchase, and the gift
That graced his letter'd store.

"*Their* pages mangled, burnt, and torn,
The loss was *his alone;*
But ages yet to come shall mourn
The burning of *his own.*"

It was some days afterwards, that Lord Mansfield, in speaking on a law-question connected with the late riots, alluded to his recent irreparable literary loss with a serene and mournful dignity which is said to have sensibly affected his audience. "I have not consulted books;" he said; "indeed, I have no books to consult." At Caen Wood, Lord Mansfield's suburban villa near Highgate, are still preserved, as interesting mementos of the past, a few singed volumes which escaped the fury of that night of memorable riot.*

Neither were the outrages and horrors, committed on Tuesday the 6th, confined to the burning of Newgate and to the destruction of the classical residence of Lord Mansfield. "Lord North's house," writes Brydone, the Traveller, to Sir Robert Keith, "was attacked about two in the morning with flambeaux and fagots, but a very few of the Light Horse, who were placed in the Square, charged full gallop down the street, and they were dispersed in a moment."† The houses of three of the London magistrates; Sir John Fielding's in Bow Street Covent Garden; Justice Cox's in Great Queen Street, and Justice Hyde's near Leicester Square, were attacked, ransacked, and demolished. The doors of the New Prison in Clerkenwell were burst open and the prisoners set at liberty. The timidity and inaction of the civil authorities, continued to be no less calamitous and incomprehensible than had been the case

* Cunningham's London, *Art.* Bloomsbury Square. See also a letter from Lord Stormont, dated 11 July 1780, in the *Memoirs of Sir Robert M. Keith*, vol. ii. pp. 102–3.

† Memoirs of Sir Robert M. Keith, vol. ii. p. 97.

from the commencement of the riots. To Lord North the King writes on the 6th—"The allowing Lord George Gordon, the avowed head of the tumult, to be at large, certainly encourages the continuation of it, to which must be added the great supineness of the civil magistrates. I fear, without more vigour, this will not subside; indeed, unless exemplary punishment is procured, it will remain a lasting disgrace, and will be a precedent for future commotions."* Again we find the King writing to Lord North—"This tumult must be got the better of or it will encourage designing men to use it as a precedent for assembling the people on other occasions. If possible, we must get to the bottom of it, and examples must be made."†

But, notwithstanding the injunctions which the King addressed to his two Secretaries of State, Wednesday, the 7th, proved to be a day of direr destruction and terror than any preceding one. The appearance of London on that eventful day was desolate and sombre in the extreme. Not only were the shops closed, but, in order to deprecate the wrath of the rioters, "No Popery" was chalked upon many doors and shutters, and strips of blue silk were suspended from the windows. By this time the rabble had made themselves masters of the arms in the Artillery Ground, and consequently, in the estimation of the timid, were a match for the military. A universal panic pervaded the respectable classes of society. Terrifying rumours were abroad that the lunatics were about to be let loose from Bedlam, and the lions from the Tower.‡ Daring notices were sent to the Governors of different prisons, intimating to them the very hour on which they were to be attacked. Even the Secretaries of State's servants, as we learn from the Duke of Grafton, wore blue cockades in their hats.§

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 147.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 395. Ed. 1857.

§ Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. vii. p. 47.

The amiable Bishop Newton, trembling, as he himself informs us, for "the labours of his whole life—his papers, his books, his prints, his pictures,"—flew with his family from the Deanery House at St. Paul's to Kew.* Devonshire House, Rockingham House, Bute House, and the official residence of the Prime Minister in Downing Street, were garrisoned by soldiers. Lord George Germaine armed his servants, and barricaded his residence in Pall Mall. When Horace Walpole called upon his kinsman, Lord Hertford, he found the Earl and his sons occupied in loading their muskets.† Lastly, not only was the riding-school in the royal grounds at Pimlico filled with soldiers, but the King, in expectation of an attack on the Queen's House, was to be seen during the night crossing to and fro between the two buildings, prepared at any moment to head his troops, and charge the rioters. ‡

It was, in fact, owing to the high moral courage and personal intrepidity manifested by George the Third, that order and authority were restored so soon as they were. Alarmed and indignant at the supineness of his Ministers and at the continued backwardness of the Magistrates in authorizing the troops to act with vigour, he resolved, to use his own expression, that although every other magistrate in the kingdom should fail in the performance of their duties, he at least would discharge the obligations imposed upon him. Accordingly, by his special commands, a meeting of the Privy Council took place on the morning of the eventful Wednesday the 7th, at which, as a matter of course, he presided in person. The two important constitutional questions, which its members were assembled to consider, were, in the first place, the amount of provocation which, in the eye of the law, would justify a Magistrate in ordering

* Life of Bishop Newton prefixed to his Works, vol. i. p. 161.
† Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 387.
‡ Wraxall's Historical Memoirs of his Own Time, vol. i. p. 347.

the military to fire upon a riotous assembly; and, secondly, whether, previously to giving such order, the law made it imperative that the Riot Act should have been previously read. On these two points there existed a difference of opinion between the King and a part of the Cabinet, and it was for the purpose of satisfying the doubts of one or the other, that the present Privy Council had been convened. Unhappily, the same want of unanimity, which prevailed in the Cabinet, manifested itself at the Council table. By the President of the Council,* and by the Speaker of the House of Commons,† it was boldly argued that because a man happened to be a soldier he was not the less a citizen, nor the less justified in repelling force by force. Other Members of the Council, on the contrary, are said to have insisted, that until an hour had elapsed after the reading of the Riot Act, it was illegal for a Magistrate to give the order to fire. Others there were, who shrank from the responsibility of giving any opinion at all. These evidences of timidity and want of concert, betrayed, as they were, at so critical a season of national peril, naturally occasioned great distress and annoyance to the King. Moreover, these shortcomings, on the part of others, entailed upon him a most unfair amount of responsibility, which, however, he shrank not from incurring. If, as he plainly told the Lords of the Privy Council, they hesitated to give him their advice, he would act without it. He would order his horse to the door, head his Guards in person, and disperse the rioters by force.‡ "I lament," he said, "the conduct of the Magistrates; but I can answer for *one*," laying his hand emphatically on his breast—"*one* who will do his duty." The evident anguish of mind, and impressive manner in which

* Earl Bathurst. † Sir Fletcher Norton.

‡ Twiss's Life of Lord Chancellor Eldon, vol. i. p. 393; Sir Walter Scott's Prose Works, vol. iv. p. 330.

these words were uttered, are said to have drawn tears from the eyes of several members of the Council. "Poor creatures!" he afterwards observed of the rioters; "they did not mean mischief." *

The peril was indeed imminent. Had the rabble in the first instance—instead of contenting themselves with burning insignificant chapels and ransacking private houses—set themselves to work to capture and demolish the Bank of England, the Palace, the public offices and private banks, the results would obviously have been incalculably calamitous. Even at the time when the King was seeking counsel and comfort from his constitutional advisers, there still existed a reasonable likelihood of these calamities befalling society, and consequently the King's uneasiness and indignation, at finding himself saddled with the almost entire responsibility of defending the cause of order and the laws, may be readily imagined. In his great embarrassment, just as the lords had risen from table, it occurred to him to send for the Attorney General Wedderburn, who seems to have been in attendance,† and to whom, on his entering the Council Chamber, he put the two momentous questions which had been under the consideration of the Assembly. Wedderburn's reply was prompt, unhesitating, and precisely after the King's own heart. If an assemblage of people, he said, were engaged in an act of outrage of such a nature as to amount to felony—such for instance as the burning of dwelling-houses—and if the civil power was ineffective to restrain them, it would then become the duty of all persons, not excepting the soldiers, to employ every means

* Letter from Lord Bute to John Home, dated 27 June 1780: *Home's Works*, vol. i. p. 153.

† On enquiry at the Privy Council Office, it appears that whenever any question of grave importance is brought under the consideration of the Privy Council, either the Attorney General, or some other of the great Law Officers, is required to be in attendance.

at their disposal to stay the mischief. In such exceptional cases, he added, the reading of the Riot Act was rendered nugatory and unnecessary, and consequently, in the absence of other opportunities of restoring order, it was not only justifiable in, but the actual duty of the military, to attack the rioters. "As Attorney General," asked the King, "is that your declaration of the law?" Wedderburn having answered in the affirmative, the King, with the assent of the Privy Council, desired him at once to write an order to the Commander in Chief, Lord Amherst, authorizing him to employ the military promptly and vigorously in dispersing the rioters, without requiring any warrant from the Civil Powers. This command Wedderburn is described as having obeyed, kneeling upon one knee at the council-table.* The opinion of the Attorney General, said the King, had always been his own opinion, but he had not hitherto ventured to give it expression. That opinion also was assented to, a few days afterwards, by Lord Mansfield. "His Majesty and those who had advised him," said the great lawyer in the House of Lords, "had acted in strict conformity to the Common Law. The military had been called in, and very wisely called in, not as soldiers, but as citizens. No matter whether their coats be red or brown, they were employed not to subvert but to preserve the Laws and Constitution which we all prize so highly."† Bishop Newton mentions Lord Mansfield's speech on this occasion as "one of the finest and ablest that ever was heard in Parliament."‡

* Adolphus's History of the Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 250, 4th Edition. The custom of kneeling to the Sovereign continued to a much later period than perhaps is generally supposed. The late Marquis Wellesley who, as Secretary of State during the year 1810, had occasional access to the presence of George the Third, used to mention that it was his never-failing practice to kneel to the King on entering the royal closet.

† Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chief Justices, vol. ii. p. 530.

‡ Bishop Newton's Works, vol. i. p. 162.

In the mean time, while the Privy Council was still sitting at Whitehall,* terrible scenes of outrage and horror were passing in other parts of London. In the course of this day, two different, though happily unsuccessful attacks, were made on the Bank of England. The extensive distillery premises in Holborn of Mr. Langdale, a wealthy Roman Catholic, were attacked and set fire to; the toll-gates on Blackfriars Bridge were forced open and plundered; and lastly the Fleet, the Marshalsea, and the King's Bench Prisons were broken into, and as soon as the prisoners had been released, were severally committed to the flames.

But if, in the broad light of day, these scenes of anarchy and destruction were fearful to look upon, far more terrible was the aspect which London presented at night. At one and the same time were to be counted thirty-six vast and distinct conflagrations. Never since the Great Fire in the reign of Charles the Second, had London presented a like scene of awful grandeur. The night happened to be one of unusual beauty; thus bringing into strong contrast the wrathful passions of man and the singular loveliness and serenity of the heavens. More than one distinguished contemporary has bequeathed us written record of his having gazed upon the mingled terror and beauty of that eventful night. Gibbon looked on, and philosophized over the degradation which had befallen his country. "Our danger is at an end," he writes a few days afterwards, "but our disgrace will be lasting, and the month of June, 1780, will ever be marked by a dark and diabo-

* Altogether, by the King's commands, three different Councils were summoned to deliberate respecting the riots; one on the 5th of June and two on the 7th. To the last of the three, the Duke of Portland, Lord Rockingham, Lord George Cavendish, and others of the leading Whigs, were expressly invited. *MS. Entries in the Privy Council Office.* Doubtless the main object of the King was the natural and laudable one that the stringent steps, which were about to be taken for the restoration of peace and order, should have the sanction of men of both parties in politics.

lical fanaticism which I had supposed to be extinct."* Dr. Johnson writes to Mrs. Thrale from his gloomy study in Bolt Court—"One might see the glare of conflagration fill the sky from many parts: the sight was dreadful."† Horace Walpole, when he ascended from the brilliant drawing-room of Gloucester House to its roof, witnessed a scene which he describes as "the most horrible he ever beheld."‡ Crabbe—"Nature's sternest painter and its best"—was a thoughtful wanderer amidst the horrors and perils of the night. Lastly, William Pitt, then a hard-working student in Lincoln's Inn, describes the ancient law-courts, upon which he looked down, as still surrounded on all sides with fire, but he adds "we may now sleep again as in a Christian country."§

Fearful, however, as were the flames which mounted to the heavens, their effect on the imagination was less harrowing than was produced by the wholesale scene of human degradation and depravity which was lighted up by their unholy glare. The district most rife with low sensuality appears to have been the neighbourhood of Holborn Hill, where the conflagration raged the fiercest. The flames, bursting forth in volumes from the houses in Fleet Market, from the Fleet Prison, from Barnard's Inn, and from Langdale's Distillery, were rendered more terribly vivid in consequence of their being fed by the streams of burning spirits which flowed from the last-named establishment. In the fierce glare, men, women, and children were to be seen rushing from their homes, carrying off such articles of property as they were most anxious to preserve. Pails full of gin were handed about among the crowd. Not only men, but women and children, were to be seen sucking

* Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works, p. 300, Ed. 1837.
† Croker's Boswell's Life of Johnson, p. 648, Ed. 1848.
‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. pp. 386, 390.
§ Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 41.

up gin and other spirituous liquors, as they flowed along the kennels. Here and there lay drunken wretches on the ground in a state of insensibility. Some of the rioters, while in this state, are said to have perished in the flames; others to have literally drunk themselves to death. Neither were the horrors of the night confined to what the eye glanced upon. By this time, the military had, in more than one quarter, been brought into bloody collision with the people, and accordingly the sounds of irregular discharges of musketry, blending with the screams of women and children, and the noise of falling rafters and crashing roofs, produced an effect which the imagination might find it difficult to realise. And yet, hideous as were that day and night, we find the man of business, and the votaries of pleasure, pursuing their ordinary occupations, apparently as unconcernedly as if society had no occasion for trepidation. Curiosity hurried the wealthy and the frivolous from the claret-bottle and the hazard-table, to the worst scenes of conflagration and carnage. The public places of amusement continued open as usual. Walpole incidentally mentions Lady Aylesbury having been at the theatre in the Haymarket; and when he himself re-entered the drawing-room of Gloucester House, it was to greet the Duke of Gloucester and the Ladies Waldegrave on their return from Ranelagh Gardens.* Wraxall mentions that one of the incidents, which struck him most forcibly on the night of the 7th, was his having been passed by a watchman near St. Andrew's Church, Holborn, who, with his lanthorn in his hand, was calling the hour, in the full glare of the conflagration, with the same apparent unconcern as if it had been a season of the profoundest tranquillity.†

"If," writes Bishop Newton, "the King, of his own

* Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 388.

† Wraxall's Historical Memoirs of his Own Time, vol. i. p. 338.

notion, had not ordered forth the soldiery, the cities of London and Westminster might have been in ashes." * During the night, the troops not only acted with vigour, but, in the neighbourhood of the Bank of England, in Bridge Street, Blackfriars, and on the bridge itself, the carnage was terrific. So complete an example, indeed, was made of the rioters, that, although the shops remained closed June 8. on the following day, and a general gloom pervaded the metropolis, little work was left to the military to perform, beyond tearing the blue cockades from the hats of those who were still bold enough to wear them, and arresting a few of the rabble, who, in hopes of being able to rekindle the conflagration, had concealed themselves among the smouldering ruins of Newgate. A sad encounter, indeed, took place in the course of the day, in Fleet Street, where, with a heroism deserving a nobler cause, a band of religious enthusiasts not only made a sudden and furious attack upon the Guards, but maintained an unequal contest with them, till twenty of the assailants had been killed and thirty-five wounded. A person, who was present when the soldiers returned to the Horse Guards, described their bayonets as literally steeped in blood.† "I went through the city yesterday," writes Brydone the Traveller on the 9th, "and saw very little disturbance. They have retired to lurking-places, and I do not believe they will ever dare to come forth again. The consternation, however, was universal, and all the shops were shut at five o'clock. Blue flags were flying from every house. Parties of the Guards were sent to pull them down, and to pull the blue cockades from every hat. Many made resistance, but at last all complied." ‡

According to the returns, prepared in the Commander in

* Bishop Newton's Works, vol. i. p. 160.
† Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 389.
‡ Memoirs of Sir Robert M. Keith, vol. ii. p. 98.

Chief's Office, the number of civilians, who were either killed or died of their wounds, was two hundred and eighty-five; there being, besides, one hundred and seventy-three persons who were lying seriously wounded in different hospitals. These returns, however, made no mention of such of the wounded as were able to crawl to their own homes, or to the home of a friend, nor of the dead who were carried home by their associates. They made no mention of the number of poor wretches who died from the effects of intoxication; no mention of those who either perished in the flames or were crushed to death by falling houses; nor, lastly, of the many innocent, as well as guilty, persons who, in a dense and agonizing pressure of human beings, which took place on Blackfriars Bridge, were either crushed to death, or forced over the parapets of the bridge into the Thames. By a tacit, and apparently general consent of all parties, no tribunal, either Parliamentary or Judicial, investigated the horrors and secrets of that fatal night. In order to avoid detection, the wounded concealed their wounds, while the strong employed the hours of darkness in stripping the dead bodies of their relatives and friends, which they then lowered, either into the black waters of the Fleet Ditch, or else into some obscure creek of the Thames, hidden from the tell-tale glare of the expiring conflagration. The same desire to suppress the broad and terrible truth appears to have been shared by the friends of order. Before day had dawned, the blood-stained walls of the Bank of England had been white-washed; the impressions left by musket-balls, on the opposite houses, had been obliterated, and fresh earth laid over the crimsoned roadway of Blackfriars Bridge. So irrational had been the late outbreak, that all classes of society seem to have united in one common desire to bury in oblivion its disgraces, its horrors, and its stupidity. Even the Opposition leaders refrained from making political

capital of the supineness and irresolution which had marked the conduct of their opponents. Even Wilkes, too, the former champion of popular license, not only declared in favour of order, but as a magistrate performed good service for society. If he were trusted with power, he said, not a rioter should be left alive.*

The cost of the mischief perpetrated during the Gordon Riots amounted to £180,000. The number of persons who were brought up for trial was one hundred and thirty-five. Forty-nine were capitally convicted, of whom twenty-nine, chiefly young men and boys,† suffered by the hands of the hangman. In the mean time, Lord George Gordon had been arrested at his house in Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square, under circumstances which reflected little credit on the prudence or foresight of Ministers. Had a proper course been followed, he would have been arrested quietly in the night-time and thrown into an ordinary jail, instead of which he was not only dignified with a lodging in the Tower of London, but was carried thither in the open day, escorted by a more imposing military force than had attended Charles the First on his way from St. James's Palace to the scaffold. Moreover, instead of being arraigned

* Croker's Boswell's Life of Johnson, p. 648; Ed. 1847. "Mr. John Wilkes," writes Dr. Johnson from Bolt Court, Fleet Street, "was this day in my neighbourhood to seize the publisher of a seditious paper." Dr. Johnson also informs us that Wilkes headed a party that beat back the rabble in one of their unsuccessful attacks upon the Bank. *Ibid.*, p. 648.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 422. The trials took place at the Old Bailey, the presiding judge being Wedderburn, who, in the mean time, had been advanced to the Chief Justiceship, with the title of Baron Loughborough. The wholesale and precipitate manner in which the prisoners were tried and convicted, and the indiscriminate severity of the sentences passed upon them, had not been paralleled in indecency since the days of Judge Jefferies. Holcroft, the dramatist, who constantly attended the trials, used especially to mention the strong impression left on his mind by the bearing of a man of "a strong, stern, sensible countenance," on being thus summarily convicted and sentenced. Unconscious apparently that he was overheard, the poor fellow muttered to himself as he was being removed from the bar;—"Short and sweet—innocent, by G—d!" *Memoirs of Thomas Holcroft*, p. 114, Edition 1852. Holcroft is known to have been the author of a "Plain and Succinct Narrative" of the Gordon Riots, which was published at the time under the name of William Vincent.

simply for a misdemeanour, which would in all probability have led to conviction, he was very unwisely tried on the imposing charge of high treason. At his trial, his behaviour was as eccentric as it had been in the House of Commons. "I heard from a person who attended the trial," writes Hannah More, "that the noble prisoner, as the papers call him, had a quarto Bible before him all the time, and was very angry because he was not permitted to read four chapters in Zechariah." * To the enthusiastic delight of his still numerous partisans, the mischievous fanatic was acquitted. "Public Thanksgivings," writes Hannah More, "were returned last Sunday in several churches for the acquittal of Lord George Gordon: I know some who actually heard it in Audley Chapel." † "I am glad," was the observation of Dr. Johnson, "that Lord George Gordon has escaped, rather than that a precedent should be established for hanging a man for Constructive Treason." ‡

The little which remains to be told of Lord George Gordon may be briefly related. His existence continued to be a comparatively obscure one till the year 1787, when, having been found guilty of two separate libels, the one
June 6. against the Queen of France, and the other against the French Ambassador, he withdrew to Holland in the hope of escaping the consequences of his trangressions. There, however, he was arrested by the Dutch authorities, and having been compelled by them to ship himself back for England, was taken into custody at Liverpool and committed to Newgate. The coincidence is rather a remarkable one, that the day on which he was subsequently tried, convicted, and sentenced to pass the remainder of his existence within its walls, was the anniversary of the one on which the massive edifice had been captured and committed to the flames

* Memoirs of Hannah More, vol. i. p. 199. † *Ibid.*, p. 200.
‡ Croker's Boswell's Life of Johnson, p. 683.

by his disciples. "Lord George Gordon," writes Storer to Lord Auckland on the 14th of December 1787, "is undoubtedly in prison and has been living in the dress and society of Jews."* In addition to the "dress and society" of the Jews, Lord George not only adopted their religion, but evinced the sincerity of his conversion by undergoing the painful initiatory rite prescribed by Judaism.† The fanatic Christian had become the fanatic disbeliever in Christianity. The former champion of Protestantism—the scion of an illustrious House, the godson of George the Second—died in Newgate of the jail distemper on the 1st of November 1793, at the age of forty-two. The consciousness that the Jews would deny him sepulture in their cemeteries is said to have embittered his closing hours. In an obscure burial-ground, attached to a Chapel of Ease on the east side of the Hampstead Road, rest, in the neighbourhood of the honoured graves of George Morland and John Hoppner, the remains of one whose fatuity and fanaticism were the occasion of so much mischief, bloodshed, and such indelible national disgrace, as it has been our task to record. No memorial points out the spot where he lies.

* Auckland Corresp., vol. i. p. 453.

† The author has in his possession a rare and curious print representing Lord George Gordon passing through the ordeal in question. The rite is being performed by a woman, while a Rabbi stands by apparently reading prayers.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The King assaulted in his Sedan-Chair, when proceeding to the Haymarket Theatre —Birth of Princess Sophia—Domestic Life at Kew—Mrs. Delany's Sketches of the Royal Family—Bishop Hurd, Preceptor to the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York—Mr. Arnold, Sub-Preceptor—Death of the two youngest of the King's Sons, Prince Alfred and Prince Octavius—The King's feelings and conduct under these Bereavements—Birth of Princess Amelia.

THE following are the few events of any interest, which, since we last parted from George the Third in his individual sphere, appear to have chequered the otherwise even tenor of his existence.

On the 28th of June 1777, as the King was on his way to the Theatre in the Haymarket, an infuriated female made a rush at his sedan-chair, smashed one of the windows, and was proceeding to other acts of violence, when she was seized by the royal attendants, and handed over to the peace-officers.

On the 3rd of November following, Queen Charlotte gave birth to the late Princess Sophia, who was baptized on the 1st of the following month, at St. James's palace.

On the 27th of July, the following year, we find the King attending the Election speeches at Eton—that favoured school in which he never failed to take an affectionate interest. It was on this occasion that the pathetic eloquence, with which the late Marquis Wellesley delivered Lord Strafford's speech at his trial, is said to have drawn tears from his audience.

On the 23rd of February 1779, the Queen presented her

consort with an eighth son, who, on the 25th of the following month, was baptized, in the great council-chamber at St. James's, by the name of Prince Octavius, and on the 22nd of September 1780, was born her ninth son, Prince Alfred.

The domestic virtues of George the Third have never been disputed. Bishop Newton records, as a circumstance which rendered his sojourn at Kew much more agreeable to him than it would otherwise have been, that, when residing there, he was able to learn more of the domestic virtues of the King and Queen, and be oftener an eye-witness of their conjugal happiness. "The nearer they were beheld," writes the Bishop, "they appeared greater and more amiable, and were a shining pattern to the very best of their subjects." *

At Kew, where the King continued to pass the summer-months during many succeeding years, he delighted in living in the greatest privacy. The late King of Hanover, speaking of his father, writes on the 5th of January, 1845 †—"He certainly appeared to me, the latter ten years of his life—I mean from 1801 to 1810—to take more interest in what was going on in private life than ever he did before; and my brother ‡ told me that, before my time, the style of life which he used to lead, part of which I can still recollect,§ was the most recluse that ever man lived; for he lived as regular as clock-work. He resided constantly at Kew from May till November, and literally never saw a living soul there but the Equerry in Waiting, who came down every morning from London to accompany him on horseback, and then instantly returned back to town, so that he had not a single gentleman near him. *Ergo*, he

* Life of Bishop Newton, prefixed to his Works, vol. i. p. 138.

† MS. Letter to the late Mr. Croker.

‡ George the Fourth.

§ The King of Hanover was born on the 5th of June 1771. He might therefore very well retain some recollection of the habits of his late father in 1780.

could know nothing that passed in the world, nor was a Minister permitted to come down to him. Wednesdays and Fridays, being levee-days, he saw them at St. James's. This part I know, from having witnessed it myself." And yet notwithstanding the high authority of the King of Hanover, it may reasonably be doubted whether George the Third was quite as ignorant of what was passing in the world as his son would lead us to suppose. "I was in waiting last week;" writes the Duke of Queensberry to George Selwyn, in April 1779; "The King talked a great deal about you. *As he knows everything*, he is perfectly well acquainted with your passion for Mie Mie."*

In the summer of the year 1776, appears to have commenced the King's interesting acquaintanceship with the celebrated Mary Granville, Mrs. Delany, then in her seventy-seventh year. This fascinating and accomplished lady had been intimate with most of the persons of genius and wit who had flourished during three generations. Her mind was stored with rare and entertaining anecdotes and memories of the past. She remembered the publication of the Tatler, and, as Hannah More writes in 1776, "the Spectator is almost too modern for her to speak of it." She had been the friend and correspondent of Swift who was born in 1667, and survived to be contemporary with a poet who died in 1855.† As a child, she had sat in the lap of Lord Bolingbroke; and Queen Anne, with her own hand, had "set her down for maid of honour." The events of the reign of Queen Anne were almost as familiar as those of the days of Pitt and Fox. The same person, who, in 1711, was in an adjoining apartment at the moment when Guiscard stabbed Harley Earl of Oxford,‡

* Selwyn Corresp., vol. iv. p. 86. "Mie Mie" was Selwyn's adopted child, Maria Fagniani, afterwards the wife of Francis Charles third Marquis of Hertford.

† Samuel Rogers. His Ode to Superstition was published 1785, three years before the death of Mrs. Delany.

‡ Memoirs of Hannah More, vol. i. p. 92. 3rd Edition.

lived to congratulate George the Third on his escape from the knife of Margaret Nicholson in 1786. For nearly seventy years she was the attached and intimate friend of Catherine Dashwood, the Delia of the poet Hammond.* The author of the "Night Thoughts" was one of her correspondents, and Horace Walpole submitted to her judgment his celebrated tragedy, "The Mysterious Mother."† Walpole's conversation is said to have been never more pleasing than at the tea-table of Mrs. Delany in St. James's Place. There also assembled Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Chapone, the Countess of Bute the gifted daughter of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Soame Jenyns, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Boscawen, Miss Burney, Hannah More, and, lastly, Lord North, ever witty and gay.‡ At the age of eighty-seven, she dictated, at the request of Dr. Burney, her recollections of Anastatia Robinson, and of the strange story of the marriage of that exquisite singer with the eccentric hero, Charles Mordaunt Earl of Peterborough.§

Cheerfully and unostentatiously pious, Mrs. Delany, even when threatened with loss of sight, and when bending beneath the infirmities of old age, retained all the good-humour and vivacity which had characterised her in her youth. "Time," writes Hannah More,‖ "has taken very little from her graces or her liveliness." With affections unchilled by time, and a heart unsubdued by calamity; delighting in the society of the young, and indulgent to their weaknesses; animated in conversation; identifying herself with every innocent diversion and enjoying literature to the last, her contemporaries describe her, at the age of eighty-four, as being as playful and animated as if she had been only eighteen. "She was honoured," writes

* Hannah More's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 161. 3rd Edition.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. vii. p. 37.

‡ Madame D'Arblay's Memoirs of Dr. Burney, vol. iii. p. 48.

§ Mrs. Delany's narrative will be found in Dr. Burney's History of Music, vol. iv. p. 247, *et sequen.*

‖ Memoirs, vol. i. p. 93.

Madame D'Arblay "by all who approached her. She was loved by all with whom she associated." *

Such was the venerable and charming lady, to whose graceful and graphic pen we are indebted for many interesting descriptions of George the Third, such as he appeared in the midst of his domestic circle, or in the society of those whom he respected and loved. One of the oldest friends of Mrs. Delany, and perhaps the friend whom she loved the best, was the accomplished Margaret Duchess Dowager of Portland, an old and especial favourite of the King and Queen. The Duchess, who was a granddaughter of Lord Treasurer Oxford,† not only shared the literary tastes of her venerable friend, but, like her, had been toasted by the poets and wits of a former generation. Swift celebrated her birth, and Prior has handed down her name to posterity by his well-known lines beginning, "My lovely, noble little Peggy!" Since the year 1768, when Mrs. Delany had the misfortune to lose a beloved husband, she had been constantly the guest of the Duchess of Portland, either in London or at Bulstrode Park in Buckinghamshire. "To see them together," writes Madame D'Arblay, "offered a view of human excellence delightful to contemplate. They endeared existence to each other, and only what was participated was enjoyed by either." ‡ It was at the latter mansion—in the same apartments in which the infamous Jeffreys had drunk bumpers of brandy to the health of James the Second, and in which the founder of the house of Bentinck had entertained William the Third—that Mrs. Delany was first presented to George the Third and Queen Charlotte, on the occasion of a visit which they paid to the

* Memoirs of Dr. Burney, vol. iii. p. 56.

† Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley, sole child and heiress of Edward second Earl of Oxford, married, in Mary-le-bone chapel, on the 14th of July 1734, William Bentinck, second Duke of Portland. The Duchess, who survived her husband twenty-three years, died July 7th, 1785.

‡ Memoirs of Dr. Burney, vol. iii. p. 51.

Duchess. Bulstrode, whenever the Court was at Windsor, was a favourite visiting-place of the King and Queen. To her friend, Mrs. Hamilton,* Mrs. Delany writes on the 28th of June 1779—"The royal family, ten in all, came at 12 o'clock. The king drove the queen in an open chaise. The Prince of Wales and Prince Frederick† rode on horseback; all with proper attendants, but no guards. Princess Royal‡ and Lady Weymouth§ in a post-chaise; Princess Augusta,‖ Princess Elizabeth,¶ Prince Adolphus,** about seven years old, and Lady Charlotte Finch†† in a coach; Prince William,‡‡ Prince Edward,§§ Duke of Montagu,‖‖ and Bishop of Lichfield,¶¶ in a coach; another coach full of attendant gentlemen. These, with all their attendants in rank and file, made a splendid figure as they drove through the park, and round the court, up to the house. The day was as brilliant as could be wished, the 12th of August, the Prince of Wales's birthday.*** The queen was in a hat, and an Italian night-gown of purple lutestring, trimmed with silver gauze. She is graceful and genteel. The dignity and sweetness of her manner, the

* Dorothea, daughter of James Forth, Esq., of Redwood, in the King's County, and widow of the Hon. and Rev. Francis Hamilton, son of James Sixth Earl of Abercorn. The royal visit which Mrs. Delany describes in this letter took place in the preceding autumn.

† Afterwards Duke of York.

‡ Charlotte Augusta Matilda, married, May 1st 1797, Frederick William Duke, and afterwards King of Wurtemberg.

§ Lady Elizabeth Cavendish Bentinck, eldest daughter of the Duchess of Portland, married, May 22nd 1759, Thomas, Viscount Weymouth, afterwards Marquis of Bath.

‖ Sophia Augusta, died unmarried.

¶ Elizabeth, married, April 7th, 1818, Philip Augustus Frederick, Hereditary Prince of Hesse Homberg.

** Adolphus Frederick, afterwards Duke of Cambridge.

†† Governess to the younger children of George the Third. See *post*, p. 307.

‡‡ William Henry, afterwards King William the Fourth.

§§ Afterwards Duke of Kent.

‖‖ George, last Duke of Montagu, K.G., governor to the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York. He died May 23rd, 1790.

¶¶ Richard Hurd, afterwards translated to Worcester, preceptor to the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York.

*** The Prince of Wales had this day completed his sixteenth year.

perfect propriety of every thing she says or does, satisfies every body she honours with her distinction, so much, that beauty is by no means wanting to make her perfectly agreeable, and though age, and long retirement from court, made me feel timid on my being called to make my appearance, I soon found myself perfectly at ease; for the king's condescension and good humour took off all awe but what one must have for so respectable a character, severely tried by his enemies at home, as well as abroad. The three princesses were all in frocks. The king and all the men were in uniform, blue and gold. They walked through the great apartments, which are in a line, and attentively observed everything; the pictures in particular. I kept back in the drawing-room, and took that opportunity of sitting down, when Princess Royal returned to me, and said the queen missed me in the train. I immediately obeyed the summons with my best alacrity. Her Majesty met me half way, and seeing me hasten my steps, called out to me—'Though I desired you to come, I did not desire you to run and fatigue yourself.'

"They all returned to the great drawing-room, where there were only two armed chairs, placed in the middle of the room for the king and queen. The king placed the Duchess Dowager of Portland in his chair, and walked about admiring the beauties of the place. Breakfast was offered; all prepared in a long gallery, that runs the length of the great apartments, a suite of eight rooms and three closets. The king and all his royal children, and the rest of the train, chose to go to the gallery, where the well-furnished tables were set; one with tea, coffee, and chocolate; another with their proper accompaniments of eatables, rolls, cakes, &c.; another table with fruits and ices in the utmost perfection, which, with a magical touch had succeeded a cold repast. The queen remained in the drawing-room. I stood at the back of her chair, which,

happening to be one of my working, gave the queen an opportunity of saying many flattering and obliging things. The Duchess Dowager of Portland brought her majesty a dish of tea on a waiter, with biscuits, which was what she chose. After she had drank her tea, she would not return the cup to the duchess, but got up and would carry it into the gallery herself, and was much pleased to see with what elegance everything was prepared. No servants but those out of livery made their appearance. The gay and pleasant appearance they all made, and the satisfaction all expressed, rewarded the attention and politeness of the Duchess of Portland, who is never so happy as when she gratifies those whom she esteems worthy of her attention and favours. The young royals seemed quite happy from the eldest to the youngest, and to inherit the gracious manners of their parents. I cannot enter upon their particular address to me, which not only did me honour, but showed their humane and benevolent respect for old age.

"The king desired me to show the queen one of my books of plants.* She seated herself in the gallery; a table and book laid before her. I kept my distance till she called me to ask some questions about the mosaic paper work, and as I stood before her majesty, the king set a chair behind me. I turned with some hesitation and confusion, on receiving so great an honour, when the queen said—'Mrs. Delany, sit down; sit down: it is not every body that has a chair brought her by a king.' So I obeyed. Amongst many gracious things, the queen asked

* At the age of seventy-four, Mrs. Delany invented a new and beautiful mode of representing plants and flowers, the leaves of which she cut out and shaped from variously-coloured Chinese paper, and placed on a black background. This art she prosecuted to her eighty-third year, when the gradual failure of her eye-sight compelled her to lay it aside. In that interval, however, of less than nine years, she had finished no fewer than nine hundred and eighty plants. *Biographical Sketch*, (pp. xiv. and xv.) attached to her "*Letters to Mrs. Frances Hamilton; now first printed from the original MSS.*" London, 1820. Mrs. Frances Hamilton was the daughter of the Hon. Mrs. Hamilton, referred to in note *, page 293.

me why I was not with the duchess when she came, for I might be sure she would ask for me. I was flattered, though I knew to whom I was obliged for the distinction, and doubly flattered by *that*. I acknowledged it in as few words as possible, and said I was particularly happy at that time to pay my duty to her majesty, as it gave me an opportunity of seeing so many of the royal family, which age and obscurity had deprived me of. 'Oh! but,' said her majesty, 'you have not seen *all* my children yet.' Upon which the king came up and asked what we were talking about, which was repeated, when the king replied to the queen —'You may put Mrs. Delany into the way of doing that, by naming a day for her to drink tea at Windsor Castle.'" *

The result of the king's good-natured hint was a command for the Duchess of Portland and Mrs. Delany to drink tea at the castle on the following evening. "We went at the hour appointed, seven o'clock," writes Mrs. Delany, "and were received in the lower private apartment at the castle; went through a large room with great bay windows, where were all the princesses and youngest princes, with their attendant ladies and gentlemen. We passed on to the bedchamber, where the queen stood in the middle of the room, with Lady Weymouth and Lady Charlotte Finch. The king and the eldest princes had walked out. When the queen took her seat, and the ladies their places, she ordered a chair to be set for me opposite to where she sat, and asked me if I felt any wind from the door or window. It was indeed a sultry day.

"At eight, the king came into the room with so much cheerfulness and good humour, that it is impossible to feel any painful restriction. † It was the hour of the king and

* Letters from Mrs. Delany to Mrs. Frances Hamilton, pp. 2—8. See also Lady Llanover's *Autobiography and Correspondence of Mrs. Delany*, vol. ii. pp. 370—5, *2nd Series*.

† In another letter Mrs. Delany mentions the King coming into the room with *his seven sons*. *Autobiography and Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 378, *2nd Series*.

queen, and eleven of the Princes and Princesses, walking on the terrace. They apologized for going, but said the crowd expected them; but they left Lady Weymouth and the Bishop of Lichfield to entertain us in their absence. We sat in the bay-window, well pleased with our companions, and the brilliant show on the terrace, on which we looked; the band of music playing all the time under the window. When they returned, we were summoned into the next room to tea, and the royals began a ball, and danced two country-dances, to the music of French horns, bassoons, and hautboys, which were the same that played on the terrace. The king came up to the Prince of Wales, and said he was sure, when he considered how great an effort it must be to play that kind of music so long a time together, that he would not continue their dancing there, but that the queen and the rest of the company were going to the Queen's House, and they should renew their dancing there, and have proper music.

"I can say no more. I cannot describe the gay, the polished appearance of the Queen's House, furnished with English manufacture. The Prince of Wales dances a minuet better than any one I have seen for many years. But what would please you more, could I do it justice, is the good sense and engaging address of one and all." *

Many years afterwards, this letter, as well as another from which we may presently have to quote, were lent by the Hamilton family to the late Mr. Croker, to be shown to the Prince of Wales, then Prince Regent. The Prince assured Mr. Croker that "they were accurately true." †

Of the persons who attended on George the Third, when he visited Bulstrode in the autumn of 1778, not the least distinguished—nor the least beloved by the King—was Richard Hurd, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, the emi-

* Letters from Mrs. Delany to Mrs. Frances Hamilton, pp. 8—10. See also *Autobiography and Correspondence of Mrs. Delany*, vol. ii. pp. 375, 377.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. iii. p. 447; note by Mr. Croker.

nent scholar, critic, poet, and divine. Dr. Hurd had been raised to the see of Lichfield in the year 1774, and, on the 5th of June 1776, was gazetted as preceptor to the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York. "The Bishop of Lichfield," writes the King to Lord North on the 28th of May, "has with great modesty and propriety agreed to be Preceptor." *

The Mr. Arnold, who is mentioned in the next letter from the King, was the Reverend William Arnold, B.D., a person of great learning and promise, who had recently been appointed sub-preceptor to the young princes. The King, who entertained the sincerest affection and esteem for him, had subsequently the satisfaction of presenting him with a Canonry of Windsor, and the Archdeaconry of Lichfield.

The King to the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry.

"WINDSOR CASTLE, *August 24th*, 1777.

"My Lord,

"I cannot refrain from exercising the greatest comfort the human mind is capable of, the communicating pleasure to those it esteems. Mr. Arnold has gained the greatest applause from the excellence of his sermon he has just delivered, which could have been equalled by nothing but the decency and modesty of his deportment. Indeed, this able, as well as valuable, man does the greatest justice to the propriety of your choice, and shows that your discernment into the characters of men is as conspicuous as your other great and amiable qualities.

"GEORGE R." †

"To the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry."

Mr. Arnold fell a victim to too close an application to study, and died insane, in 1802. From the following extract of a letter addressed by the King to Bishop Hurd, dated Windsor, 23rd July 1782, it would appear that this

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 96; Ed. 1858.
† Bentley's Miscellany, vol. xxvi. p. 329.

amiable person had on a previous occasion been afflicted with aberration of mind, which the King and Queen, with a considerate delicacy which reflects great honour upon them, had religiously kept a secret. "I now come to a part of your letter," writes the King, "that gave me much concern; but should at the same time have felt hurt if you had not informed me of. I fear the relapse of poor Dr. Arnold. His conduct, during the time he attended you, seemed as favourable as any of us could desire. I hope he will soon be reinstated; and I trust you will not leave me in suspense upon a subject that greatly interests me, for I have ever thought him, not only ingenious, but perfectly upright, and, as such, I have a very sincere regard for him. Except the Queen, no one here has the smallest suspicion of his having a fresh attack, which is an attention I am certain he every way deserves." During the last distressing illness of this excellent person he is said to have received great attention from his Sovereign.*

In 1781, in consequence of the translation of Dr. Brownlow North from the bishopric of Worcester to that of Winchester, the King had the satisfaction of preferring Bishop Hurd to the former see. The King also appointed him his Clerk of the Closet.

The King to the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry.

"WINDSOR, *May 2nd*, 1781.

"My good Lord,

"I have this instant received the account of the death of my very worthy and much esteemed friend, the Bishop of Winchester.† To a heart like yours it is easy to conceive that the news could not reach me without causing some emotion, though reason convinces me that for him it is a most welcome event. I therefore

* "George 3, his Court and Family," vol. i. p. 442, *note*. Mr. Arnold, who was a fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, was the son of the Reverend Richard Arnold, fellow of Emanuel College, Cambridge, and Rector of Thurcaston, in Leicestershire, the latter an author of some learning though of little note. An account of the father will be found in *Nichols's Anecdotes of Bowyer*, pp. 295 and 639.

† Dr. John Thomas, died May 1, 1781.

lose no time in acquainting you that I cannot think of any person so proper to succeed him as Clerk of my Closet as yourself; and, indeed, I trust that any opportunity that brings you nearer to my person cannot be unpleasing to you. Relying on this, I have acquainted the Lord Chamberlain, to notify this appointment to you, but I thought any mark of my regard would best be conveyed by myself. I trust, therefore, that this letter will reach you before any intimation from him. I have also directed Lord North to acquaint you that I propose to translate you to the See of Worcester. With all the partiality natural to the county of Stafford, I should hope you will allow Hartlebury to be a better summer residence than Eccleshall, and I flatter myself that hereafter you will not object to a situation that may not require so long a journey every year as either of those places. Believe me, at all times,

"My good Lord, your very sincere friend,

"GEORGE R." *

"To the Lord Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry."

Of the King's general amiability and unaffected deportment, the following further extracts from the correspondence of the venerable Mrs. Delany continue to afford us very pleasing evidence:—

Mrs. Delany to the Viscountess Andover.

(Extract.)

"BULSTRODE, *9th October*, 1779.

"A summons came from Windsor to the Duchess Dowager of Portland to come that evening, (the 29th ultimo,) to the Queen's Lodge, and to 'bring Mrs. Delany with her.' The summons was obeyed to a minute. We were there at seven o'clock. Unfortunately, when we stopped at the Lodge, it rained violently, and her Grace—muffled up with her triple drapery—was, on stepping into the door, taken by the hand by his Majesty, before she could shake off her *involucrums*, who laid his commands on the Bishop of Lichfield to take care of me. Thus honourably conducted, we were led into the drawing-room to the Queen. The

* Bentley's Miscellany, vol. xxvi. p. 330.

ladies with her were Lady Holderness, Lady Weymouth,* Lady Charlotte Finch, Lady Boston, Lady Courtown, surrounded with her royal offspring. To tell you all the particulars of their gracious manners, and the agreeableness of the evening, and the delightful and uncommon scene of royal domestic felicity—of the sweet music and of my *flirtations*—would be rather too much for a letter, and must be postponed for a winter tale in St. James's Place, where I hope for the happiness of seeing my dear Elford friends much and often." †

Mrs. Delany to Miss Port of Ilam.

(Extracts.)

"Bulstrode, 10*th Oct.* 1779.

"In my last letter to your dear mama, I began an account of the honours I received at the Queen's Lodge, Windsor, on Wednesday the 29th of September, Princess Royal's birthday; but I do not remember where I left off, and am afraid I may repeat what I have already written; but that must take its chance.

"The Queen was dressed in an embroidered lutestring; Princess Royal in deep orange or scarlet, I could not by candle-light distinguish which; Princess Augusta in pink; Princess Elizabeth in blue. These were all in robes, without aprons. Princess Mary,‡ a most sweet child, was in cherry-coloured tabby, with silver leading-strings. She is about four years old. She could not remember my name, but, making me a very low curtsy, she said—'How do you do, Duchess of Portland's friend? And how does your little niece do? I wish you had brought her.' The King carried about in his arms, by turns, Princess Sophia,§ and the last Prince, Octavius,‖ so called, being the eighth son. I never saw more lovely children, nor a more pleasing sight than the King's fondness for them and the Queen's. For they seem to have but one mind, and that is to make everything easy and happy about them. The King brought in his arms the little Prince

* Lady Holderness and Lady Weymouth were severally Ladies of the Bedchamber to Queen Charlotte.

† Life and Correspondence of Mrs. Delany, by Lady Llanover, vol. ii. pp. 470—1, 2nd series.

‡ Afterwards Duchess of Gloucester, born April 25, 1776.

§ Born November 3, 1777. ‖ Born February 23, 1779.

Octavius to me, who held out his hand to play with me, which, on my taking the liberty to kiss, his Majesty made him kiss my cheek. We had a charming concert of vocal and instrumental music; but no ladies, except those I have named, came into the second drawing-room, nor any of the gentlemen. They staid in the concert-room. The King, and the rest of the royal family, came backwards and forwards, and I cannot tell you how gracious they all were. They talked to me a great deal by turns. When any favourite song was sung, the Queen, attended by her ladies, went and stood at the door of the concert-room, and a chair was ordered to be placed at the door for the Duchess of Portland, when Prince Ernest*—about nine years old—carried a chair, so large he could hardly lift it, and placed it by the Duchess for me to sit by her. We staid till past eleven; came home by a charming moon; did not sup till past twelve, nor in bed till two." †

Mrs. Delany to the Hon. Mrs. Hamilton.

"[Bulstrode,] 9 December 1781.

"On Tuesday morning, a quarter before ten, the Duchess of Portland stept into her chaise, and I had the honour of attending her. We went to Garrat's [Gerard's] Cross, about the middle of the common, by the appointment and command of the King, who came, about a quarter of an hour after, with the Prince of Wales, and a large retinue. His Majesty came up immediately to the Duchess of Portland's carriage; most gracious, and delighted to see the Duchess out so early. The Queen was there with the two elder princesses and Lady Courtown,‡ in a post-coach and four. The King came with a message from the Queen to the Duchess of Portland, to say her Majesty would see her safe back to Bulstrode, and breakfast with her Grace. The Duke of Cumberland § was there and a great many carriages, and many of our acquaintance; amongst them Lady Mary Forbes and her family. She took three rooms at the Bull Inn, and breakfasted thirty people. The King himself ordered the spot where the Duchess of Portland's chaise should stand to see the stag turned

* Afterwards Duke of Cumberland and King of Hanover.

† Life and Correspondence of Mrs. Delany, by Lady Llanover, vol. ii. pp. 472—4, 2nd Series.

‡ Mary, daughter and coheir of Richard Powys, Esq., of Hintlesham Hall, Suffolk, and wife of James, Second Earl of Courtown. She died in 1810.

§ Henry Frederick, the King's brother.

out. It was brought in a cart to that place by the King's command. The stag was set at liberty, and the poor trembling creature bounded over the plain, in hopes of escaping from his pursuers; but the dogs and the hunters were soon after him and all out of sight." *

Two days afterwards, the Duchess and Mrs. Delany paid a visit to their majesties at Windsor. "The King and Queen and the Princesses" writes Mrs. Delany, "received us in the drawing-room, to which we went through the concert-room. Princess Mary took me by the left hand; Princess Sophia and the sweet little Prince Octavius took me by the right, and led me after the Duchess of Portland into the drawing-room. The King nodded and smiled upon my little conductors, and bid them lead me to the Queen, who stood in the middle of the room. When we were all seated —for the Queen is so gracious she will always make me sit down—the Duchess of Portland sat next to the Queen, and I next to Princess Royal. On the other side of me was a chair, and his Majesty did me the honour to sit by me. He went backwards and forwards between that and the music-room. He was so gracious as to have a good deal of conversation with me, particularly about Handel's music; and ordered those pieces to be played which he found I gave a preference to. In the course of the evening the Queen changed places with Princess Royal, saying, most graciously, she must have a little conversation with Mrs. Delany, which lasted about half an hour. She then got up, it being half an hour after ten, and said she was afraid she should keep the Duchess of Portland too late. There was nobody but their attendants, and Lord and Lady Courtown. Nothing could be more easy and agreeable." †

In the winter of 1780-1, the King was deprived of the

* Letters from Mrs. Delany to Mrs. Frances Hamilton, pp. 18, 20—21.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 22—24. The contents of this scarce and interesting little volume are only in part printed in Lady Llanover's Life and Correspondence of Mrs. Delany.

society of two of his sons; the Duke of York having proceeded to Prussia, for the purpose of being educated for the military profession, and Prince William Henry, afterwards King William the Fourth, having gone to sea as a Midshipman of the "Prince George." The King's farewell parting with the Duke of York—at this period the most beloved by him of all his children—not only brought tears into his eyes, but, during the long absence of that favourite son from England, a mere recurrence to his name seems to have sensibly affected his partial father. On one occasion, a lady happening to surprise him with a tear falling down his cheek, the King made no secret of the source of his weakness. "I was entreating God," he said, "to protect and bless my dear boys." *

On the 20th of August, 1782, death for the first time deprived George the Third of one of his beloved children. On that day died his youngest son, Prince Alfred, a few hours before whose dissolution the King addressed the following interesting letter to his spiritual adviser:—

The King to the Bishop of Worcester.

"WINDSOR, *Aug. 20th*, 1782.

"My good Lord,

"There is no probability, and, indeed, scarce a possibility, that my youngest child can survive this day. The knowing you are acquainted with the tender feelings of the Queen's heart, convinces me you will be uneasy till apprized that she is calling the only solid assistant under affliction, religion, to her assistance. She feels the peculiar goodness of Divine Providence, in never having before put her to so severe a trial, though she has so numerous a family. I do not deny [that] I also write to you, my good lord, as a balm to my mind. As I have not you present to converse with, I think it the most pleasing occupation, by this means, to convey to you that I place my confidence that the Almighty will never fill my cup of sorrow fuller than I can bear. And, when I reflect on the dear cause of our tribulation, I consider his change to be so greatly for his advantage, that I

* "George 3, his Court and Family," vol. ii. pp. 7—8.

sometimes think it unkind to wish his recovery had been effected. And, when I take this event in another point of view, and reflect how much more miserable it would have been to have seen him lead a life of pain, and perhaps end thus at a more mature age, I also confess that the goodness of the Almighty appears strongly in what certainly gives me great concern, but might have been still more severe.

"G. R." *

"To the Lord Bishop of Worcester."

"I was at Windsor Castle," writes Lord Bute's accomplished daughter-in-law, Mrs. Stuart, "at the time of the death of Prince Alfred, a child of two years old, and who had suffered great agonies. When he had become tranquil, shortly before expiring, the King took the Queen out of the room, and expressed a wish to read a sermon as usual, it being Sunday evening. He selected that of Blair on Death, which closes with the beautiful description from the Revelations of the Church triumphant. While reading it a slight knock was heard at the door. The King seemed to shudder, but went on reading. When the description was ended he went up to the Queen, and taking her hand most affectionately said—'Such, my dearest, I humbly trust our little Alfred now is. That knock informed me he is passed from death unto life.' He then wept tenderly." †

Yet, tenderly as the King loved this child, there was another of his younger children whom he seems to have loved even better. "I am very sorry for Alfred," said the King, "but had it been Octavius, I should have died too." ‡ Little did he anticipate perhaps, when he uttered these words, that, in less than nine months, that cherished child would follow his infant brother to the tomb. Prince Octavius died on the 2nd of May 1783, at the age of four years and a few weeks. The following touching letter,

* Earl Stanhope's History of England, vol. vii. p. xxxv. Appendix; Bentley's Miscellany, vol. xxvi. p. 333.

† Stuart M.S. ‡ Walpole's Corresp., vol. viii. p. 363.

written four days after the loss of his child, will best explain the state of the King's feelings:—

The King to the Bishop of Worcester.

"My good Lord,

"The humanity, which is not among the least conspicuous of your excellent qualities, would, I am persuaded, make you feel for the present distress in which the Queen and I are involved, had you not the farther incitement of a sincere attachment to us both. The little object we are deploring was known to you, and consequently his merits; therefore you will not be surprised that the blow is strong. We both call on the sole assistant to those in distress, the dictates of religion. I have proposed to the Queen, and she approves of it, that I should desire you to come on Saturday, and bring Mr. Fisher * with you; that, on Sunday, in my chapel in the castle, we may have the comfort of hearing you preach, and receiving from your hands the holy communion. I think this a very proper time for renewing the baptismal vow; and, though greatly grieved, I feel true submission to the decrees of Providence, and great thankfulness for having enjoyed for four years that dear infant.

"GEORGE R." †

"WINDSOR, *May 6th*, 1783."

"The King and Queen," writes Hannah More, "have suffered infinitely from the loss of the sweet little Prince, who was the darling of their hearts. I was charmed with an expression of the King's.—'Many people,' said he, 'would regret they ever had so sweet a child, since they were forced to part with him.' That is not my case. I am thankful to God for having graciously allowed me to enjoy

* The Reverend John Fisher, Canon of Windsor, was for some time preceptor of the King's fourth son, Edward Duke of Kent, and afterwards of the Princess Charlotte of Wales. In 1803, he was elevated to the Bishopric of Exeter, and in 1807 was translated to the See of Salisbury. He died in May 1825. Madame d'Arblay speaks of him, as being "in very high, and very deserved favour, with all the royal family." *Diary and Letters*, vol. iii. pp. 132—3.

† Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. vii. p. xxxvi. Appendix; Bentley's Misc., vol. xxvi. p. 333.

such a creature for four years.'"* Yet the grief of the King and Queen is said to have been excessive.

It used to be related by the late Lady Charlotte Finch, governess to the younger children of George the Third,† that on the occasions when her duty obliged her to call up the King in the night, during the illnesses of any of his children, she had often been surprised at his not immediately noticing her summons. In due time, however, she discovered the cause. The King, before quitting his apartment, was in the habit of offering up his prayers, not merely for the recovery of his child, but for resignation and support for himself, and for wisdom to guide him so as to act for the best.‡

On the 7th of August 1783, the Queen gave birth to her fifteenth and last child, the Princess Amelia, who subsequently succeeded Prince Octavius as the darling child of her father.

* Life of Hannah More, vol. i. p. 282; 3rd Edition.

† Lady Charlotte Fermor, daughter of Thomas, first Earl of Pomfret, was born February 14, 1725, and married, in 1746, the Hon. William Finch, by whom she became the mother of George, ninth Earl of Winchelsea and fourth Earl of Nottingham. "As soon as the Prince of Wales [George the Fourth] was born," writes her accomplished acquaintance, Miss Cornelia Knight, "she took her station by his cradle, on being appointed Governess to the royal infant and his future brothers and sisters. She had continued in the exercise of that duty till they were all grown up, and never was any one in a similar employment more sincerely or more justly esteemed and beloved. Her judgment was clear and her manners perfect. I have always thought it equally honourable to her royal pupils and to herself, that, however differing in pursuits and disposition, they were all warmly attached to Lady Charlotte Finch. It might be truly said of her that she was 'formed to make virtue amiable.'" *Miss Knight's Autobiography*, vol. i. pp. 167—8. Lady Charlotte died July 11, 1813, in her 89th year, having been a widow forty-seven years. "She was," writes Walpole, "an accomplished and most estimable person." *Memoirs of the Reign of George* 3, vol. iv. p. 312, *note*.

‡ Stuart MS.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

State of Public Affairs—Rodney's Naval Victories—Relief of Gibraltar—"Armed Neutrality" of the Great Powers of Europe—First Appearance in Parliament of William Pitt, R. B. Sheridan, and William Wilberforce—General Admiration of Pitt's Eloquence—Charles Fox, his Position, and his Associates—Naval Operations against the Dutch—Rodney's Capture of the Island of St. Eustatia—Events in America—Surrender of Charleston to the British—Battles of Camden and Catawba Fords—Treasonable Correspondence of the American General Arnold with Major André—Tragical Fate of Major André—Indecisive Military Operations—Surrender of the British forces under Lord Cornwallis to General Washington at York Town.

WHEN we last turned from the subject of politics to glance over the personal and domestic history of George the Third, black clouds were threatening the destinies of England. In addition to the contest which she was waging with her North American Colonies, she was not only at war both with France and Spain, but hostilities with Holland were also imminent. Ireland was bordering on rebellion. The ancient naval glory of England seemed threatening to take its flight for ever. American privateers rode listlessly at anchor at the mouth of the Frith of Forth. England, as has usually been her lot at the commencement of a deadly struggle, had shown herself only half-armed and half-prepared to encounter her foes. Happily, from this state of humiliation she was about to be raised by the genius and valour of an illustrious Englishman, whose story forms an interesting episode in the annals of those times.

Admiral Sir George Brydges Rodney, afterwards Lord Rodney, was born on the 19th of February 1718, and consequently, when, on the 1st of October 1779, he was appointed naval Commander in Chief on the Leeward Island

Station, he was in his sixty-second year. In the war with France which terminated in 1762, he had distinguished himself as a most able and gallant officer, since which period he had devoted much of his time and thoughts in devising projects for destroying or disabling the fleets of the enemies of his country.* Unfortunately the expenses entailed upon him by a numerous family, as well as the exercise of a too generous hospitality, and, it is said, the allurements of the gaming-table, had involved him in pecuniary difficulties, which rendered it much more convenient, if not safer, for him, to reside in France than in England. In Paris, however, where he took up his abode, not only did his striking person, his fascinating manners, and agreeable and enlightened conversation, lead to his society being courted by the most fashionable and most fastidious, but, in the highest military and naval circles, ample honour was done to his ardent patriotism and great professional talents, by a people whom he had formerly taught to tremble at the mention of his name.

The great object of Rodney's life was to be afforded an opportunity of distinguishing himself in time of war. Bitter, then, had been his disappointment and mortification, when, on the breaking out of hostilities with France in 1778, not only did his repeated, and, to use his own word, "humble" applications to the Admiralty for employment, prove ineffectual, but when one flag officer after another, junior to him in rank, was selected to serve against the enemy in preference to himself. Ardently he longed to repair to London, and to lay his claims personally before his Sovereign, but his debts and his creditors prevented his quitting Paris. In his distress, according to Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, he sent over Lady Rodney to England, in the vain hope of her being able to induce his friends there to open a subscription in his

* Mundy's Life of Rodney, vol. i. p. 161.

behalf at White's Club. "Delays," he writes to her, "are worse than death, especially at this critical time when every hour teems with momentary expectation of war." *

The pecuniary relief, which Rodney was unable to procure from his friends in England, he subsequently owed to the noble generosity of a Frenchman and an enemy to his country. He was still longing for the means of transporting himself from Paris to London, when the high-minded Maréchal Biron, in the most delicate manner, made him the offer of his purse. "He told me," writes Rodney, "that all France was sensible of the services I had rendered my country, and that the treatment, they all knew I had received, was a disgrace to the nation and to its ministers."† Twice the offers of the "good old man," as Rodney styles him, were gratefully but firmly declined. Eventually, however, the temptation proved too great for the gallant Admiral's powers of resistance. He has at length, he writes to Lady Rodney on the 6th of May 1778, been induced to accept the loan of one thousand louis from the Maréchal; a sum, he adds, which will enable him to leave Paris without either incurring reproach, or being molested by his creditors. "Their demands," he proceeds, "were all satisfied this day; and the few days I remain in this city will be occupied in visiting all those great families from whom I have received so many civilities, and whose attention, in paying me daily and constant visits, in a great measure kept my creditors from being so troublesome as they otherwise would have been."‡ It may be mentioned that, four years afterwards, when the tidings of the great victory, obtained by Rodney over the Count de Grasse, spread consternation throughout France, the populace of Paris turned all their fury towards the venerable Maré-

* Mundy's Life of Rodney, vol. i. p. 173. † *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 180.
‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. pp. 180, 181.

chal, and even menaced him with personal violence, as having been the means of enabling Rodney to quit their shores. The peril, however, affected him but little. He gloried alike, he said, in the man whose freedom he had procured, and in the victory which he had so nobly won.*

But although Rodney was now on the spot to urge his claims upon the Admiralty, it was not till the 1st of October 1779, that his services were called into requisition, when he was appointed Commander in Chief on the Leeward Islands and Barbadoes station. Little time was lost by Rodney in realizing the expectations of his friends. Sailing from England, with a fair wind, on the 29th of December, he fell in with, and captured, on the 8th of January following, a rich Spanish convoy consisting of numerous vessels laden with naval stores and provisions, bound from St. Sebastian for Cadiz. But a far more brilliant success awaited him. On the 16th of the same month, he encountered, off St. Vincent, the Spanish fleet, consisting of eleven ships of the line and two frigates, commanded by Don Juan de Langara. The obstacles which stared him in the face—such as the approach of darkness, a lee-shore rendered formidable by shoals and breakers, and the tempestuous state of the weather—would have probably deterred a less adventurous commander from seeking to bring on an action, and thus have afforded the enemy an opportunity of effecting their escape. Rodney, however, at once bore down upon the Spanish Admiral, by whom he was encountered with a gallantry equal to his own. In darkness and confusion the conflict raged till two hours after midnight, when one of the Spanish line of battle ships blew up with a terrible explosion. Every person on board perished.† Subsequently, four of the enemy's line of battle ships, including Langara's

* Mundy's Life of Rodney, vol. i. pp. 182, 183.

† Rodney's despatch to the Admiralty, January 27th, 1780; *Life by Mundy*, vol. i. p. 222.

flag-ship, the "Phœnix," were captured and brought into Gibraltar. Two more were driven on shore and lost, the remainder effecting their escape in so shattered a condition that the Spanish fleet may almost be said to have been annihilated.

Thus was Rodney enabled to carry out the first article of his instructions, the relief of Gibraltar, at this time closely besieged by the forces of Spain and France. Considering the contemptuous treatment which he had received from the Government, we may readily imagine the proud nature of his feelings when he took up his pen and wrote to his ungracious employers—"Great Britain is again mistress of the Straits." To Lady Rodney he writes a few days afterwards—"I have likewise relieved Minorca; and Great Britain this moment reigns sovereign of the Mediterranean, as well as of the ocean." * Having supplied Gibraltar with provisions and other stores, and having received the congratulations of its brave defenders, Rodney, in pursuance of his instructions, steered his course for the West Indies, where he hoped to achieve still more important and brilliant triumphs. The advantages which, at this momentous national crisis, a glorious and overwhelming naval victory would confer upon Great Britain were incalculable. Not only was Holland secretly preparing to become the ally of France and Spain, but most of the great Powers of Europe, jealous of the maritime power and of the exclusive maritime rights claimed by Great Britain, were leagued against her by what is well known as the "Armed Neutrality." All that man could do, Rodney was alike prepared and burning to achieve. Great, then, was his
April 7. satisfaction, when the sight of the French fleet, commanded by the Count de Guichen, seemed to assure him the great victory which he had so long been promising himself. He

* Rodney's Life by Mundy, vol. i. pp. 223, 228.

was destined, however, to encounter a bitter disappointment. Having succeeded in gaining his primary object, that of bringing the enemy to close quarters, he bore down, with his accustomed gallantry, in his Flag Ship, the "Sandwich," upon De Guichen's Flag Ship, the "Couronne," expecting to meet with that entire support from his officers, without which it was impossible that a signal and decisive victory could be achieved. Owing, however, either to pusillanimity, to disaffection, or to inefficiency, on the part of his captains, the British ships became only partially engaged, and the action consequently proved to be an indecisive one. Neither did Rodney's disappointment cease here. He had not only the mortification to learn, at a later date, that De Guichen had returned with his ships to Europe, convoying a rich fleet of homeward-bound merchant-ships, but that the Spanish fleet, under the command of Admiral Solaro, which he had hoped to intercept and force to give him battle, was riding securely at anchor at the Havannah.

In the mean time, the British Parliament had been dis- 1780.
solved on the 1st of September, and on the 31st of October the recently elected House of Commons, comprising no fewer than one hundred and thirteen new members, assembled at Westminster. Ministers, at the commencement of the campaign, achieved several signal triumphs. In both houses of Parliament, the amendments proposed by the Opposition to the Address were rejected by large majorities. The Government nominee for the Speakership of the House of Commons, Mr. Charles Wolfran Cornwall, was elected in the place of Sir Fletcher Norton.* Under these circumstances, it was to no purpose that Burke again brought forward his plan of Economical Reform. It was thrown out on the second reading by a majority of 233 against 190. Equally futile was an attempt made by Fox to put an end

* Mr. Cornwall was elected by 203 votes a ainst 134.

hastened to assure his future rival how highly he appreciated the eloquence and ability which he had just displayed. "Fox," writes Walpole, "was charmed with his outset, and loved him." * Only on one occasion had they previously met, when, during a debate in the House of Lords, Pitt, then a mere boy, had accidentally found himself standing side by side with Fox upon the steps of the throne. On that occasion, Fox, as he himself used to relate, had been not a little surprised at the deep interest taken in the discussions by one so young; the future orator repeatedly turning to him and exclaiming—"But surely, Mr. Fox, that might be met thus;"—or, "Yes, but surely, he lays himself open to this retort." † When they now for the second time met, and while they were renewing their acquaintance in the House of Commons, a veteran member, said to have been General Grant, approached and somewhat disconcerted them both by an ill-timed remark which escaped him. "You may well," he said to Fox, "praise young Pitt for his speech, for except yourself there is no man in the House could have made such another. Old as I am, I expect and hope to hear you both battling it within these walls, as I have done your fathers before you." "General," was the happy reply of Pitt, "I have no doubt you would like to live to the age of Methuselah." ‡

On the 31st of May following, Pitt again addressed the House of Commons, Fox, who at the same moment had risen to speak, at once giving way and resuming his seat. On this, as on the first occasion, the success of the youthful orator was complete. "The papers," writes his friend Wilberforce a few days afterwards, § "will have informed you how Mr. William Pitt,

* Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 623.
† Lord Macaulay's Biographies, p. 147.
‡ Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 262.
§ 9 June 1781. Life of Wilberforce, vol. i. p. 22.

second son of the late Lord Chatham, has distinguished himself. He comes out, as his father did, a ready-made orator, and I doubt not but that I shall one day or other see him the first man in the country." In the same spirit of prophetic commendation, Horace Walpole writes to General Conway on the 3rd of June;—"Young William Pitt has again displayed paternal oratory. The other day, on the Commission of Accounts, he answered Lord North, and tore him limb from limb. If Charles Fox could feel, one would think such a rival, with an unspotted character, would rouse him. What if a Pitt and Fox should again be rivals?" * Great indeed was the advantage which Pitt's "unspotted character" gave him over Fox. Not only had the latter, by high play, by his dealings with money-lenders, and by the pursuit of pleasure, reduced himself to the verge of ruin, but it was a fact, that at the very time when Pitt was achieving his second triumph in the House of Commons, the Sheriff's officers were actually in possession of Fox's house in St. James's Street. "As I came up St. James's Street," writes Walpole to General Conway on the 31st of May, "I saw a cart and porters at Charles's door; coppers and old chests of drawers loading. In short, his success at faro has awakened his host of creditors, but unless his bank had swelled to the size of the Bank of England, it would not have yielded a sop a piece for each. Epsom, too, had been unpropitious, and one creditor has actually seized and carried off his goods, which did not seem worth removing. As I returned, full of this scene, whom should I find sauntering by my own door but Charles? He came up, and talked to me at the coach-window on the Marriage Bill, with as much *sang-froid* as if he knew nothing of what had happened." †

* Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 48. Ed. 1858.

† *Ibid.*, vol. viii. pp. 46—47. On the 6th of May Walpole had written to

"It is a curious fact," writes Lord Macaulay, "well remembered by some very recently living, that, soon after this debate, [26 February] Pitt's name was put up by Fox at Brooks's."* Doubtless Fox and his political friends were only too pleased at being able to attach to their society as well as to their party one of so illustrious a name and of Parliamentary abilities of so high a promise, but it was a predilection which proved only of short continuance. It was in fact only three years afterwards, that—opposite to the very windows of Brooks's and apparently at the instigation of some of its Members—Pitt was subjected, not only to the grossest insults, but to imminent personal peril.† Yet, notwithstanding the indignation which this outrage is likely to have provoked in his mind, and the further fact that the most prominent members of the Club subsequently became his bitterest political opponents, he continued to pay his subscription to Brooks's to the close of his life. Wraxall informs us, and we may readily credit the fact, that from the time that Pitt became Prime Minister he rarely crossed its threshold.‡ In addition to Brooks's, he was also, at this time, a member of "Goosetree's" in Pall Mall, a club consisting chiefly of young men of a social position corresponding to his own, where he certainly played frequently, though probably not deeply. "I well remember," writes Wilberforce, "the intense earnestness which he displayed when joining in those

General Conway,—"My nephew, Lord Cholmondeley, the banker *à la mode*, has been demolished. He and his associate, Sir Willoughby Aston, went early the other night to Brooks's, before Charles Fox and Fitzpatrick, who kept a bank there, were come; but they soon arrived, attacked their rivals, broke their bank, and won above four thousand pounds. 'There!' said Fox; 'so should all usurpers be served.' He did still better; for he sent for his tradesmen, and paid as far as the money would go. In the mornings he continues his war on Lord North, but cannot break *that* bank." *Ibid.*, p. 38.

* Lord Macaulay's Biographies, p. 152. † See *post*, p. 479.

‡ Wraxall's Historical Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 343. "Mr. Pitt was proposed by Mr. Fox on the 20th of February, and chosen February 28th, 1781. Mr. Pitt continued a Member of Brooks's Club up to the year in which he died—1806." *Private information* kindly furnished to the author from the books of Brooks's Club.

games of chance. He perceived their increasing fascination and soon after suddenly abandoned them for ever."* Ambition, not pleasure, had become the Goddess of his idolatry. "Fox," writes Wraxall, "soon perceived the coldness of his new ally, for whom play had no attractions, and who beheld a faro-table without emotion." †

In the mean time, the war which Holland had provoked with Great Britain was productive of little advantage to the Dutch. Not only, in both the Indies as well as nearer home, were her merchantmen captured by the British, but, in the West Indies, the important Island of St. Eustatia, the great mart for her merchandise and wealth in that quarter of the world, was surrendered at the approach of the British fleet under the command of Sir George Rodney. It was in vain that the merchants of the Island protested against what they styled an invasion of private property and individual rights. In vain they insisted that St. Eustatia was a free port, and that the valuable stores which it contained were the property of other nations as well as of the Dutch. It was Rodney's ready reply that not only the Dutch, but the British residents, were under contract to furnish naval stores and provisions to the enemies of Great Britain, and accordingly he turned a deaf ear to their remonstrances. "The Island of Eustatia," he said, "was Dutch; every thing in it was Dutch; every thing was under the protection of the Dutch flag; and, as Dutch, it should be treated." The property seized was calculated to be worth two millions of money, in addition to which, six ships of war and one hundred and thirty merchant-vessels fell into the hands of the victors. A Dutch convoy, valued at more than half a million of money, had previously sailed from St. Eustatia, but was presently captured by a force which

* Life of Wilberforce, vol. i. p. 18.
† Wraxall's Historical Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 343.

Rodney had despatched to intercept it on its way to Europe.*

About six months after the capture of St. Eustatia, a gallant, though indecisive, action took place near the Dogger Bank between a British naval squadron, commanded by Admiral Hyde Parker, and a superior Dutch force under Admiral Zouttman. So hard-fought was the engagement, and so crippled at its close were the ships on both sides, that Admiral Zouttman bore away with his squadron to the Texel, while Admiral Parker, dissatisfied alike with the Admiralty and with his officers, made the best of his way to the Nore. Here the King paid him the high compliment of visiting him on board his Flag Ship, but, notwithstanding this flattering tribute to his personal merits, he insisted on resigning his command. "Sir," he said in reply to the King's congratulations, "I wish your Majesty younger officers and better ships. As for me I am grown too old for the Service."†

1780. In the mean time, the war between Great Britain and her revolted Colonies had been progressing with various success; not ingloriously, as regarded the military reputation of England, but evidently pregnant with ultimate failure and disgrace. On the 12th of May 1780, the important city of Charleston surrendered to a British force of five thousand men, commanded by Sir Henry Clinton; upwards of five thousand Americans, on that occasion, laying down their arms, and four hundred pieces of cannon, three American frigates and one French frigate falling into the hands of the victors. This success was followed, on the 16th of August, by the battle of Camden, in which Lord Cornwallis, at the head of two thousand men, defeated General Gates with an army of upwards of four thousand. Eight hundred Americans fell in battle;

* Mundy's Life of Rodney, vol. ii. pp. 11, 18, 19.

† Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. vii. pp. 140, 141.

nine hundred and fifty were made prisoners. So signal was the victory, that Gates scarcely considered himself secure till one hundred and ninety miles separated him from the British head-quarters.* Two days afterwards, at Catawba Fords, Colonel Tarleton, a brave and impetuous officer, encountered a detached American corps commanded by General Sumpter, whom he utterly routed.

The American campaign of 1780 was distinguished by two episodes of considerable interest, the arch-treason of General Benedict Arnold, and the hard fate of the chival- Oct. 2.
rous, accomplished, and idolized Major John André. In the story of the patriotism and death of poor André, the King appears to have taken the greatest interest. The well-known monument in Westminster to the memory of him—WHO FELL A SACRIFICE TO HIS ZEAL FOR HIS KING AND COUNTRY—was erected by the King's commands and at his expense. Moreover, the King not only cordially sanctioned a proper provision being made for the mother and sisters of the departed hero, but, by a graceful act, apparently of his own suggestion, endeavoured to wipe away from his name and memory any undue odium, which, from the degrading manner of his death, was likely to attach to them. In the words of an American writer—"The generous sentiments and noble conduct of the King, both in regard to the memory of André and the tokens of substantial kindness to his family, claim and must ever receive the highest applause."†

* Apparently the horse, which carried General Gates through his long flight, was the son of the identical charger "properly caparisoned," which, nearly five years previously, the American Congress had presented to Washington's aide-de-camp, Colonel Baylor, for his gallantry at the Battle of Princeton. See *ante*, p. 167, *note*. According to the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of September 6, 1780—"General Gates's flight was rapidly continued three days into Virginia, one hundred and ninety miles from the field of action." It was effected, we are told, "upon a celebrated horse, the son of Colonel Baylor's 'Fearnought,' own brother to his Grace of Kingston's famous 'Careless,' purchased of a General Officer of the first distinction." *Moore's Diary of the American Revolution*, vol. ii. p. 312, *note*. In the "Racing Calendar" for 1775, the Duke of Kingston's "Careless" figures as the sire of more than one racehorse of the time. † Sparks's Life of Benedict Arnold, p. 307.

Lord George Germaine to Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Clinton.

(Extract.)

"His Majesty has read with much concern the very affecting narrative of Major André's capture and the fatal consequences of that misfortune related in your letter, and his Majesty was graciously pleased to express his entire approbation of your having complied with his request of disposing of his commission for the advantage of his family. And I have the satisfaction to add that his Majesty has further extended his royal bounty to Major André's mother by the grant of a pension, and has offered to confer the honour of knighthood on his brother in order to wipe away all stain from the family, that the ignominy of the death he was so unjustly put to, might be thought to have occasioned." *

On the 4th of March 1781, the King conferred, not knighthood only, but a baronetcy, on Major André's brother, William Lewis André, at whose death, on the 11th of November 1802, the title became extinct.

1781. Jan. 17. The first hostile encounter which took place the following year upon American soil, was at a place called the Cowpens, in South Carolina, between one thousand British Infantry and Cavalry, commanded by Colonel Tarleton, and about the same number of American Regulars and Militiamen, led by General Morgan. Victory in the first instance seemed to favour Tarleton, before whose customary onset of impetuous valour the American Militia gave way at every point. But, whatever cause may have changed the fortunes of the day, the Americans were afforded time to rally, and accordingly the gallant Tarleton —"that enterprising though inhuman young officer," as he is styled in the *New Jersey Gazette* of the 21st of February†—not only found himself overpowered by superior numbers, but it was with difficulty that, at the head of a

* Sparks's Life of Benedict Arnold, p. 308.

† Moore's Diary of the American Revolution, vol. ii. p. 375.

few dragoons, he contrived to cut his way through the enemy and effect his escape. In this unfortunate affair seven hundred British soldiers were either killed or taken prisoners.

But although, with this exception, success continued for a considerable time to wait on the British arms, so extensive was the basis of operations, so numerous and so wide apart were the different military posts which it was requisite to maintain, and so many brave men fell in the repeated engagements which took place, as to render victory almost profitless, and ultimate success almost impossible. For instance, although Lord Cornwallis, with a very inferior force, succeeded in defeating the Americans at Guildford Court-House and capturing four of their field-pieces, so weakened was his small army by a loss of five hundred men, killed and wounded, as to compel him, instead of pursuing the enemy, to retrace his steps. Equally unprofitable proved to be the success obtained by the British on the slope of Hobkirk's Hill, now a beautiful summer suburb of Camden, where Lord Rawdon, with only eight or nine hundred men, attacked and defeated General Greene, though in command of two thousand Americans. Again, although Colonel Cruger, the English commandant of the important post of Ninety Six, gallantly repulsed an assault made upon him by Greene, so reduced in numbers were the British forces, that Lord Rawdon was compelled to withdraw the garrison and to retire to Orangeburgh. Lastly, at the brilliant and well-contested action at Ewtaw Springs, notwithstanding General Stewart found himself master of the field of battle, the loss of nearly seven hundred men, in killed, wounded, and missing, compelled him to retreat to Charleston, and thus enabled General Greene to re-occupy his former position. Well might Lord Cornwallis have exclaimed—as Pyrrhus exclaimed after vanquishing the Romans at Asculum—"One more such victory and we are

Mar. 15.

Apr. 25.

Sept. 8.

undone." Well, too, might Mr. Pitt describe the war in America as "a series of ineffective victories or severe defeats—victories only celebrated with temporary triumph over our brethren whom we would trample down, or defeats which fill the land with mourning for the loss of dear and valuable relations, slain in the impious cause of enforcing unconditional submission."* By this time, so weakened was the British force in South Carolina as no longer to be able to keep the field, while, on the contrary, the spirits of the Americans seemed to rise with each successive discomfiture. Much of this uncomplaining, and even cheerful, endurance of disaster and defeat, appears to have been owing to the indomitable energy and lofty patriotism of their leader, General Greene. This remarkable man, although brought up to the humble occupation of a blacksmith, and a Quaker by persuasion, seems to have been eminently qualified, alike to win the confidence and affection of an army, and to distinguish himself in that irregular system of warfare, in which it was his fortune to find himself engaged. Long since, he had declared his resolution either to recover the Carolinas or die in the attempt; and though discomfiture had followed discomfiture, his heart had never sunk within him, neither had his genius or his ingenuity ever failed him. On the 1st of May we find him writing to General Washington —"We fight; get beat, and fight again."

Had Great Britain, at this period, been mistress of the North American and West India waters, the great disaster, which was impending over her, would very probably have been averted. We allude, of course, to the approaching surrender of Lord Cornwallis and his army at York Town. Unhappily, while the British Fleet at New York, now under the command of Admiral Graves, amounted only to twenty-five sail of the line, a French fleet, consisting of

* Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 61.

no fewer than thirty-six, was riding triumphantly in the Chesapeake. The same relative disproportion marked the rival military forces on shore. When, for instance, the combined French and American army, under the command of Washington and De Rochambeau, commenced its march to give battle to the British in Virginia, it amounted to eighteen or nineteen thousand men, whereas Lord Cornwallis could number under his command only seven thousand.

Towards the extremity of a narrow peninsula, washed on the north side by the York River, and on the south side by the James River, formerly stood the flourishing town, but, in our time, almost deserted village, of York Town. Thither it was that Lord Cornwallis, at the approach of the formidable army which threatened him with destruction, withdrew with his comparatively insignificant force, and there, placing them behind the half-completed entrenchments which he had hurriedly thrown up, he prepared to defend himself to the last. His situation was a very precarious one. In addition to inferiority of numbers, disease was beginning to spread havoc among his men, while the fact that the two rivers, which flowed one on each side of him, were in command of the enemy's war-vessels, rendered the investment of his position, by the enemy, a work of comparatively easy accomplishment. Lord Cornwallis was certainly not a military commander possessing the highest order of genius; but, on the other hand, he was an able soldier and a man of a high and noble resolution, and consequently, in the present perilous hour, the honour of his country, and the safety of his troops, could scarcely have been confided to more unexceptionable hands.

In the mean time, precarious as was the position of Cornwallis and of his gallant followers, their spirits had as yet been supported by the hope of receiving large reinforcements from New York, the arrival of which was hourly expected.

On the 16th of September, Cornwallis had written to his superior officer, Sir Henry Clinton, representing his precarious position, and in reply had received the most cheering assurances of prompt assistance. "At a meeting," Clinton wrote back, "of the General and Flag Officers held this day, it is determined that above 5,000 men, rank and file, shall be embarked on board the King's ships, and the joint exertions of the army and navy made in a few days to relieve you, and afterwards co-operate with you. The fleet consists of twenty-three sail of the line, three of which are three-deckers. There is every reason to hope we start from hence the 5th of October."* But the 5th of October, and many succeeding days, came and went, and yet no sign of a friendly armament making its appearance on the waters, gladdened the hearts of Cornwallis and his gallant troops. Meanwhile their position had become more and more perilous. Disease was rapidly thinning their ranks. Washington had succeeded in obtaining possession of some advantageous ground commanding the British works. On the 1st of October the investment of York Town was reported to be complete.

Washington had now easy work before him. On the 9th, the completion of his first parallel enabled him to open a deadly fire from mortars and howitzers. On the 14th he was far advanced in his second parallel. "I think," writes Washington to the President of Congress on the 16th, "the batteries of the second parallel will be in sufficient forwardness to begin to play in the course of this day. The enemy last night made a sortie for the first time. They entered one of the French and one of the American batteries on the second parallel, which were unfinished. They had only time to thrust the points of their bayonets into the touch-holes of four pieces of the French, and two of the American, artillery, and break them off, but the spikes were easily extracted.

* Cornwallis' Correspondence, vol. i. pp. 119, 120.

They were repulsed, the moment the supporting troops came up, leaving behind them seven or eight dead, and six prisoners." * A more successful sortie, however, was made, a little before daybreak, on the following day, when the British forced the redoubts that covered the batteries, spiked eleven heavy cannon, and, after having killed or wounded about one hundred French soldiers, regained their lines with little loss. † But, by this time, one hundred pieces of heavy ordnance were playing from the batteries of the Allies, while along the British works scarcely a British gun remained mounted. The storm of shot and shell was incessant. Even the heart of the noble Cornwallis began to fail him. Enfiladed at every point, his shells nearly expended, his defences half demolished and tumbling to pieces, there remained no hope of his saving his army from destruction but by withdrawing them across the York River to Gloucester Point, where he had previously had the precaution to throw up redoubts and intrenchments. "I had only," he writes to Sir Henry Clinton, "to choose between preparing to surrender next day, or endeavouring to get off with the greatest part of the troops, and I determined to attempt the latter."

But, by this time, the elements had leagued themselves on the side of the enemies of England. A part of the army had been safely carried over to the other side of the river, when there arose so violent a storm of wind and rain, as effectually to prevent the embarkation of the remainder. The word surrender was a bitter one to pass the lips of the high-spirited and noble-minded Cornwallis, but no other alternative remained to him. Accordingly, on the 17th he despatched a flag of truce to General Washington, admitting that his post was no longer tenable, and proposing a cessation of hostilities. The actual surrender of the British Army took place on the 19th; the garrisons, both of York Town

* Washington's Writings, by Sparks, vol. viii. p. 180.
† Stedman's Hist. of the American War, vol. ii. p. 411.

and Gloucester Point, being allowed to march out by beat of drum but with their colours *cased*. Moreover orders were issued by Washington that, during the painful ceremonial of the British laying down their arms, no American or French soldier should indulge in any sign of exultation. Not a single camp-follower was allowed to witness the humiliation of the British arms. Unfortunately this consideration for their feelings was ill responded to by the British officers, who, as they marched between the French and American lines, courteously saluted every French officer, however inferior his rank, while they pointedly refrained from taking any notice of the American officers, however high their grade. *

At the time of the capitulation of York Town, the British army had been reduced by disease and the casualties of war to less than six thousand men, of whom only four thousand and seventeen were reported fit for duty. This great inferiority of force, as compared with that of the enemy, although it diminished the discredit of the surrender, in no degree abridged the magnitude of the disaster. With reference to the unfortunate delay which took place in despatching reinforcements from New York, no blame appears to attach itself to Sir Henry Clinton. "We had the misfortune," he writes, "to see almost every succeeding day produce some naval obstruction or other to protract our

* Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. vii. p. 181. "About one o'clock, the articles of capitulation were signed and interchanged, and about two o'clock p.m. the British garrison of York, led by General O'Hara—Lord Cornwallis being *indisposed*—were conducted by General Lincoln through the combined army, drawn up in two lines, to a field, where, having grounded their arms, and stripped off their accoutrements, they were reconducted through the lines, and committed to the care of a guard. At the same time, and in the same manner, the garrison of Gloucester was surrendered to the command of the Duke de Lauzun. Previous to this, a detachment of French, and one of American troops, took possession of the British horaworks, and planted on the epaulements the standards of the two nations." *New York Journal for November* 12, 1781; *Moore's Diary of the American Revolution*, vol. ii. p. 508. General Lincoln, who on this occasion conducted the British troops through the French and American lines, was the officer who commanded the garrison of Charleston on its surrender to Sir Henry Clinton, on the 12th of May 1780.

departure; and I am sorry to add that it was the afternoon of the 19th before the fleet was fairly at sea." Provoking indeed is the reflection, that, at the time when the British fleet—carrying on board of it an army of eight thousand troops—made its appearance off the Chesapeake, only five days had elapsed since the British army had laid down its arms.* But whoever, or whatever, may have been the occasions of the heartburnings and recriminations which were the natural consequences of the surrender at York Town, that event had at least the desirable effect of bringing nearer to a close that fratricidal and miserable contest, which Great Britain had so long and so unprofitably been waging with her revolted Colonies. "The infant Hercules in his cradle," writes Franklin, "has now strangled his second serpent."† From the day on which Washington and Cornwallis signed the articles of capitulation at York Town, the war may be said to have been at an end, and the Americans to have established themselves as a Sovereign and Independent People.

* Earl Stanhope's Hist. of England, vol. vii. p. 132.
† Washington's Life and Writings, by Sparks, vol. viii. p. 189.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Effect in England of the news of Lord Cornwallis's Surrender—Lord North's Distraction—The King's Equanimity—Debates in Parliament—Fierce Invectives of Charles Fox—Lord North's Defence—Speeches of Burke and Pitt in Opposition—Majority for Ministers—Decreasing numbers of the Ministerial Majority in the House of Commons—Fox's motion of Censure on Lord Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty—Retirement of Lord George Germaine from the Ministry—Offence given by his Elevation to the Peerage—Majority of *one* for Ministers on General Conway's Motion to Stop the War—Succession of Attacks on the Government—Lord North's Speech on intimating the Resignation of Ministers—Distress of the King, who contemplates retiring to Hanover—The Rockingham and Shelburne Administration—The King's parting Letters to the Earl of Dartmouth and Lord North—Personal Affection of the King for Lord North.

On Sunday the 25th of November 1781, two days before the re-assembling of Parliament, the despatch, containing the news of the terrible calamity which had befallen the British arms, arrived at the private residence of the Secretary of State for American affairs, Lord George Germaine, in Pall Mall. Lord George, having in the first instance forwarded the despatch to the King at Kew, proceeded to Downing Street, in order personally to break the distressing intelligence to Lord North. Apathetic as that stoical Minister had shown himself on many previous occasions of national peril, the blow which now fell upon him completely staggered his philosophy. Scarcely could the painful reflection have failed to occur to him, not only how active had been the part which he had taken in prolonging, and conducting to a most humiliating close, a disastrous and ineffectual contest, but that latterly the part which he had taken had been in direct opposition to his own conscientious

convictions. "I asked Lord George afterwards," writes Wraxall, "how he [Lord North] took the communication when made to him?—'As he would have taken a bullet through his breast,' replied Lord George; 'for he opened his arms, exclaiming wildly, as he paced up and down the apartment a few minutes—'Oh, God! it is all over!'—words which he repeated many times under emotions of the greatest consternation and distress."*

George the Third, on the contrary, deeply as the tidings of Lord Cornwallis's surrender must have distressed him, continued to display that equanimity and humble resignation to the will of Heaven which were his never failing characteristics in the hour of affliction. Infatuated as he may have been on the subject of retaining the American Colonies as appanages of the British Crown—unfortunate as may have been his persistent attempt to obtain that object at the point of the bayonet—he had at least the satisfaction of knowing that his intentions had been honest, and that he had been actuated by no other motives than a desire to avert a consummation which, in common with numbers of wise and thinking men, he devoutly believed to be fraught with disgrace to his Crown and Kingdom, with future discord and enmities among the Americans themselves, and in every way adverse to the interests and welfare of his subjects on each side of the Atlantic. Even Lord Shelburne, little love as he personally bore his Sovereign, had the generosity, in his seat in the House of Lords, to speak of the King's motives as those of "a Prince of a valorous and generous mind, gathering firmness from misfortune."†

On the day on which the despatch announcing the surrender of the British army at York Town was received by the Government, Sir Nathaniel Wraxall happened to be

* Wraxall's Historical Memoirs, vol. ii. pp. 434—5, 3rd Edition.
† Parl. Hist., vol. xxii. col. 644.

dining with Lord George Germaine in Pall Mall, when he and his fellow-guests were for the first time informed of the great calamity which had befallen the country. The conversation chancing to turn upon the hourly-expected news of the dissolution of the Prime Minister of France, the Count de Maurepas, who had been greatly instrumental in prevailing upon his countrymen to take an active part in the contest between Great Britain and America, it was remarked by one of the guests that as De Maurepas had witnessed the commencement of the American Revolution, it would probably grieve him not to survive its termination. "He has survived to witness it completely;" replied Lord George: "the army has surrendered. The army has surrendered, and you may peruse the particulars of the capitulation in that paper." He then, with visible emotion, drew forth the original despatch announcing the disaster, and handed it to Wraxall to read aloud to the company.* It was in the course of the evening that the King's reply to the painful communication which had been despatched to him was received by Lord George Germaine. It was written in his Majesty's usually bold and steady characters, and yet, to the practised eye of Lord George, it afforded internal evidence that the King's mind was ill at ease. It was the King's practice in his correspondence with his Ministers, as will have been remarked in these pages, to affix to his notes the exact hour and minute at which they were despatched from the palace, but, on this trying occasion, there was a significant departure from this almost invariable rule. As regards the sentiments contained in the note, they reflected, according to Lord George, the highest

* Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. ii. pp. 436—8. 3rd Edition. Horace Walpole writes to Sir Horace Mann, Nov. 29;—"They say that M. de Maurepas, who is dying, being told that the Duc de Lauzun had brought the news of Lord Cornwallis's surrender, said—from Racine's 'Mithridate,' I think—

'Mes derniers regards ont vu fuir les Romains.'"

Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 120.

honour on "his Majesty's fortitude, firmness, and constancy of character." *

On Tuesday, the 27th of November, the King opened the Session of Parliament with the usual speech from the throne. Retaining a firm confidence, he said, in the wisdom and protection of Divine Providence, and firmly convinced of the justice of his cause, he had no doubt but that, "by the concurrence and support of Parliament, by the valour of his fleets and armies, and by a vigorous, animated, and united exertion of the faculties and resources of his people," he should be able to restore the blessings of peace to his dominions. † Such language as this, betraying, apparently, the resolution of the King and his ministers to prolong the unholy and disastrous war across the Atlantic, naturally provoked very severe animadversions from the Opposition, in both Houses of Parliament. In the Upper House, Lord Shelburne headed the attack on the Government; while, in the Commons, Fox and Burke hurled their denunciations against Lord North and his colleagues in language of rare eloquence and most unsparing invective. It had been the general opinion, exclaimed Fox, that the

* Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. ii. pp. 437, 439. Sir Henry Clinton's original despatch, announcing the surrender of Lord Cornwallis's Army, dated 29th October 1781, No. 145, is indorsed as having been received in Downing Street "25*th* November *at midnight*," viz., some hours *after* the conversation, which, according to Wraxall, took place at Lord George Germaine's table. (*From official information.*) From this circumstance, as well as from the fact of Sir Henry Clinton's despatch containing no "particulars" of the capitulation, it has been concluded that Sir Nathaniel's statement must be "entirely false." *Cornwallis Corresp.*, vol. i. p. 129, *note*. The "paper," however, which Wraxall read aloud was evidently not Sir Henry Clinton's despatch, nor intended by Wraxall to convey the impression that it was, but the French account of the surrender, which, as may be seen by referring to the London newspapers of Monday, the 26th of November, was received at the Secretary of State's office in the *forenoon* of the preceding day, and which contained much fuller particulars of the disaster than the English official account. *Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 433. Whenever Wraxall writes of what he himself actually saw or heard, there seems little reason, as far as we are able to judge, for questioning his truthfulness, however credulous he may at times have been in accepting as facts the statements of others.

† Parl. Hist., vol. xxii. col. 637.

speech from the throne would have invited Parliament to devise the most speedy and efficacious means of putting an end to the terrible calamities which at present afflicted the country, and of preventing the further disastrous expenditure of blood and treasure. But, instead, he added, of their having been gratified by so desirable an announcement, they had listened to a speech breathing vengeance, blood, misery, and rancour. He then gave vent to language such as has not been listened to in the House of Commons since the days of Charles the First, and such as George the Third may, as a true Christian, have forgiven, but which it was impossible that he should ever forget. "Those persons," said Fox, "who might chance to be ignorant that the Speech from the throne was the composition, not of the Sovereign himself, but of a Cabinet Council, would set it down as containing the sentiments of some arbitrary, despotic, hard-hearted, and unfeeling monarch, who, having involved his subjects in a ruinous and unnatural war to glut his feelings of revenge, was determined to persevere in it, in spite of calamity and even of fate. Divest the speech," said Fox, "of its official forms, and what was its purport? 'Our losses in America have been most calamitous. The blood of my subjects has flowed in copious streams. The treasures of Great Britain have been wantonly lavished. The load of taxes imposed on an over-burthened country is become intolerable. My rage for conquest is unquenched; my revenge unsated; nor can anything except the total subjugation of my revolted American subjects allay my animosity.' As for Ministers," said Fox, "they were a curse to their country; they had made Great Britain an object of scorn and derision to the nations of the earth. But," he added, "the time will surely come when an oppressed and irritated people will firmly call for signal punishment on those whose counsels have brought the nation so near to the brink of destruction. An indignant

nation would surely in the end compel them to make some faint atonement for the magnitude of their offences, on a PUBLIC SCAFFOLD." *

The reply of Lord North, however mistaken he may have been in his views, was able, dignified, and manly. Ministers, he said, had been accused of having instituted and persevered in the American war for the purpose of adding to the influence of the Crown. The charge was highly injurious and unjust. "Did not men know," he continued, "that the Americans wished to be governed by the King and their own Assemblies, and that they went to war because they would not be governed by the Legislature of Great Britain?" It was not therefore to increase the influence of the Crown, but for the sake of the Constitution—for the sake of preserving the supremacy and just rights and privileges of the Parliament of Great Britain—that the war with the Colonies had been carried on. A melancholy disaster, said Lord North, had befallen our arms in Virginia, but were we on that account to lie down and die? No! it ought rather to rouse, to urge, to impel, to animate us into action. By bold and united exertions everything might yet be saved. By dejection and despair everything must inevitably be lost. He had been threatened during the debate, he said, "with impeachment and the scaffold; but that threat should not deter him from doing his utmost to preserve the rights and legislative authority of Parliament. The war with America had been unfortunate, but it was not on that account necessarily an unjust one." †

Lord North was answered by Burke in a speech of thrilling, if not convincing, eloquence. "Are we," he said, "to be told of the rights for which we went to war? Oh!

* Belsham's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 233–4; Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. ii. pp. 455—6; Parl. Hist., vol. xxii. cols. 689—692; Fox's Speeches, vol. i. p. 424.

† Parl. Hist., vol. xxii. cols. 715—17.

excellent rights! Oh! valuable rights! — Valuable you should be, for we have paid dear at parting with you. Oh! valuable rights, that have cost England thirteen provinces, four islands, a hundred thousand men, and more than seventy millions of money! Oh! wonderful rights, that have lost to Great Britain her empire on the ocean, her boasted, grand, and substantial superiority, which made the world bend before her! Oh! inestimable rights, that have taken from us our rank among nations, our importance abroad, and our happiness at home; that have taken from us our trade, our manufactures, and our commerce; that have reduced us from the most flourishing empire in the world to one of the most unenviable powers on the face of the globe! Oh! wonderful rights, that are likely to take from us all that yet remains!" *

Pitt, also, speaking on the side of the Opposition, acquired fresh laurels by his eloquence. "Mr. W. Pitt," writes Walpole, "again made a most brilliant figure, to the admiration of all men of all sides." † Even those, who remembered the brilliant eloquence with which Charles Fox, at the age of twenty, had addressed the House of Commons, were not the less amazed at the finished oratory, the polished sentences, and the bitter invectives which they now listened to from the lips of his destined rival. Fox himself enthusiastically declared in the course of the debate, that "he could no longer lament the loss of Lord Chatham, for he was again living in his son, with all his virtues and all his talents." ‡

Yet brilliant on this occasion, as was the display of eloquence on the part of the Opposition, so powerful remained the Parliamentary influence of Lord North, so great was the infatuation which pervaded both Houses of Parlia-

* Burke's Speeches, vol. ii. p. 288.
† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 478.
‡ Life of Romilly, by his Sons, vol. i. p. 192.

ment, and so unwilling were many Members to stultify their recorded opinions and votes by pronouncing judgment against a war which they had so long and tenaciously supported, that the Address was carried in the House of Lords by 75 peers against 31, and, in the House of Commons by 218 votes against 129. To Lord North the King writes on the following day in allusion to the Division in the Commons — "I am delighted at the majority, and not surprised that some principal Members have wavered in their sentiments." * It was not long, however, before waverers began to be converted into active opponents. So long as there had remained a prospect of lightening the pecuniary burdens of Great Britain by taxing America, the war had been a popular one; but now that the contest was evidently fraught with military disaster and financial distress, several independent Members of the House of Commons, who had lately been staunch supporters of the Government, began to withdraw from their allegiance. For instance, on the 12th of December, two wealthy and powerful Commoners, Sir James Lowther, Member for Cumberland, and Mr. Thomas Powys,† Member for Northamptonshire, severally moved and seconded a Resolution to the effect that any attempt to reduce America to obedience by force of arms was impolitic, and ought to be abandoned. The motion was lost, but it was only by a diminished majority of forty-one.‡ "I was rather disappointed," writes the King on the following day to Lord North, "at the majority not being greater against the question moved by Sir James Lowther."§

Out of doors, moreover, as well as within the walls of Parliament, the public had begun to raise their voices against

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 160. Edition, 1858.

† Created, in 1797, Baron Lilford. He sat in five Parliaments for the county of Northampton, and died 26 January 1800.

‡ 220 to 179.

§ Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 160.

the further prosecution of the war. Meetings were convened by the Corporation of London; by the counties of Middlesex and Surrey; by the electors of Westminster, and by the West India merchants, at each of which resolutions were passed condemnatory of the prolongation of hostilities. Ministers, who had long since been out of favour with the public, had, owing to a concurrence of adverse circumstances, become more unpopular than ever. The Island of St. Eustatia had been recaptured by the Marquis de Bouillé. With the exception of Barbadoes and Antigua, all the Leeward Islands in the West Indies ceased to be in the possession of Great Britain. Minorca, containing the best harbour in the Mediterranean, had been compelled to capitulate.

But the event, which, more than any other circumstance, tended to complete the unpopularity of the King's Tory Ministers, was the inglorious return to England of Admiral Kempenfelt, who had been sent, with twelve sail of the line, to intercept a French fleet on its way from Brest for the East and West Indies, the capture of which appears to have been anticipated as a certain event. Kempenfelt, indeed, succeeded in falling in with the enemy, but, to his dismay, discovered that their force consisted of as many as nineteen line of battle ships, and consequently he felt it his duty to avoid an engagement. As might be expected, all the wrath of the country was poured upon Lord Sandwich, as First Lord of the Admiralty, who, while six ships of war were lying in the Downs, had allowed Kempenfelt to sail from England with so inadequate an armament. "If Lord Sandwich can weather it," writes Walpole to Mann, "he will be skilful or fortunate indeed;" and Walpole adds;—"most mouths are opened against him, not only in Opposition and in town, but at Court."* "The question of Kempenfelt," writes Sir George Savile to Lord Rockingham, "seems

* Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 129.

to lie in a mighty narrow compass. When you sent out twelve ships did you know that they had nineteen or not? If you did *not*, culpable ignorance; if you *did*, worse."*

To attack Lord Sandwich in Parliament, and, in the person of Lord Sandwich, the Administration, was now the policy of the Opposition. Accordingly, on the 7th of February, Charles Fox, in the course of a magnificent speech delivered by him in the House of Commons, not only charged him with being the author of the many naval failures and disasters which had disgraced the country during the war, but moved for a vote of censure upon his conduct. The result of the Division manifested the growing weakness of the Administration. The motion was defeated by a majority of only twenty-two, and, when, on the 23rd, the discussion was renewed by Fox, a majority of nineteen only was obtained by Ministers. 1782.

Still more an object of dislike, as a Minister, than Lord Sandwich, was Lord George Germaine. His declared and obstinate determination to advise the King to continue the war with America not only rendered him especially obnoxious to the Opposition, but so detrimental was his general unpopularity to the well-being of the Administration, as to induce his colleagues to desire his retirement from office. "Let the consequence be what it may," had been his words in the House of Commons on the 12th of December, "I will never put my hand to any instrument conceding Independence to the Colonies. My opinion is, and has ever been, that the British Empire must be ruined, and that we never can continue to exist as a great, or as a powerful nation, unless we retain the sovereignty of America."† On Lord North devolved the disagreeable task of communicating to his colleague the necessity for his resigning the seals. "Very well, my Lord," was

* Rockingham Corresp., vol. ii. pp. 440, 441.

† Parl. Hist. vol. xxii. cols. 828—9.

Lord George's reply, "but pray why is your lordship to stay?"* It has been said, though apparently on insufficient authority, that it was with great unwillingness that the King accepted the seals from Lord George Germaine. At all events, the King's letters to Lord North betray no anxiety on this point. "Lord George," he writes on the 26th of December, "is not unwilling to retire if he gets his object, which is a peerage. No one can then say he is disgraced;" and the King adds, "If you think it best to gratify Lord George, I will sound Mr. Jenkinson as to succeeding him."† Lord George was accordingly offered a Barony, but he haughtily insisted on being at once created a Viscount. His aide-de-camp, he said, as well as his secretary, and his advocate, had all been made Barons, and he was unwilling to take rank below them.‡ This concession having been made to him, he was created, on the 11th of February 1782, Viscount Sackville of Drayton in Northamptonshire; Mr. Welbore Ellis, afterwards Lord Mendip, being at the same time appointed to succeed him as Secretary of State for the Colonies.

In more than one quarter, the elevation of Lord George Germaine to the peerage raised a vehement outcry, and nowhere a more furious and unmerited one than among the Opposition Lords in the Upper House. They ought to have remembered, that whatever might have been Lord George's conduct at the battle of Minden, there had since elapsed an interval of twenty-two years during which he had filled with zeal and ability more than one office in the State; and further that his restoration to the Privy Council, in 1765, which had tacitly acknowledged his eligibility to

* Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 493.

† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. pp. 160, 161.

‡ The persons alluded to by Lord George Germaine were Lord Amherst, at this time Commander in Chief of the Army; Thomas de Grey, created Baron Walsingham, in 1780, who had formerly been his Under Secretary of State in the Colonial Department; and Alexander Wedderburn, now Lord Loughborough, who had been Lord George's leading Counsel at his trial by Court Martial in 1759.

hold those appointments, had been the act, not of his Tory friends, but of the Whigs themselves. But pity and generosity were alike lost sight of in the bitterness of party animosity. Lord Carmarthen not only moved a resolution to the effect that it was derogatory to the dignity of the House of Peers to raise to their Order a person labouring under censure of Court Martial, but, even after the new Peer had taken his seat on the benches of the House of Lords, he renewed his motion, in the words of Walpole "like a bloodhound;" actually causing the sentence of the Court Martial to be read before Lord George's face.* The motion, which was met by Lord George with singular composure, was negatived by a large majority.

At length, on the 22nd of February, 1782, when the unpopularity of Ministers was at its height, and when the people of England were becoming more and more convinced of the madness of protracting the contest with America — General Conway, in a crowded and anxious House of Commons, moved an Address to the Throne praying "that the war on the Continent of North America might no longer be pursued for the impracticable purpose of reducing the inhabitants of that country to obedience." For many reasons, the task which he had undertaken could scarcely have been entrusted to more capable hands. Conway, it will be remembered, was the person who, in former years, had been the first to denounce Grenville's famous Stamp Act, and to foretell the terrible mischiefs with which it was pregnant, and had afterwards successfully moved for its Repeal. On the present occasion he had alike diligently investigated, and thoroughly mastered,

* Francis Godolphin, Marquis of Carmarthen, succeeded in March 1789 as fifth Duke of Leeds. "The King," writes Walpole, "was so angry at Lord Carmarthen's motion that he immediately ordered Lord George Germaine's patent to be notified in the next *Gazette*, which it was on the 11th." *Walpole's Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 496. Lord Carmarthen had formerly been a Lord of the Bedchamber to the King and afterwards became Lord Chamberlain to the Queen. He died 31 January 1799

the merits of the all-important question on which he had engaged himself to speak; his patriotism and integrity were of the very purest cast; and lastly, being unconnected by political ties with either the Rockingham or the Shelburne section of the Whig party, his arguments promised to carry with them all the weight which ought to attach itself to holy and earnest intentions. Happily the success which crowned his efforts was complete. "The effect of his speech," writes Walpole, "was incredible."* The truth and sincerity which it breathed, combined with his manifest and affecting singlemindedness of purpose, and his intimate acquaintanceship with facts, rendered his speech, if not the most eloquent, at least one of the most convincing and effective of any in the memory of the oldest member of the House of Commons. Such was the effect which it produced that when, amidst a scene of extraordinary excitement, the result of the Division was announced, it was found that the numbers were 194 to 193; thus leaving Ministers with a majority of only *one*. Hearty congratulations complimented Conway on his noble success, of which the most eloquent was that of Charles Fox. Twice, he said, he had saved his country. This was his second triumph.†

From this time, till the actual fall of the North Administration, the House of Commons continued to present, almost daily, a scene of the keenest excitement. Attack after attack, attended with various success, was levelled at Ministers. By both parties, every attempt was made—as had been the case during the memorable debates which drove Sir Robert Walpole from his long tenure of power ‡

* Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 506.

† See *ante*, vol. i. pp. 331—3.

‡ "It was a most shocking sight," writes Horace Walpole on the 22nd of January 1742, "to see the sick and dead brought in on both sides. Men on crutches, and Sir William Gordon from his bed, with a blister on his head, and flannel hanging out from under his wig. I could scarce pity him for his ingratitude." *Walpole's Letters*, vol. i. p. 120.

—to secure the attendance and votes of the sick, the halt, and the lukewarm. The existence of the Government was evidently becoming more and more precarious, and accordingly, as the chances of success fluctuated from time to time, the countenances of the members on the Opposition side of the House are described as becoming more and more animated with confidence and hope, and those on the Ministerial benches as correspondingly elated or dejected. As might be expected, the chief brunt of party violence fell upon Lord North, who was not only taxed with having brought ruin and humiliation on his country, but was also reviled for a further offence, of which he was certainly innocent, a greedy and unpatriotic attachment to the vulgar gains and godsends of office. To these attacks he was in the habit of replying with a composure and dignity which elicited admiration even from his enemies. He was resolved, he said in the House of Commons on the 5th of March, not to quit his post until he should receive his Royal Master's command to leave it, or till the will of the House, expressed in the most unequivocal terms, should point out the propriety of his withdrawing from employment. "As to the emoluments of my situation," he exclaimed, "God knows, were they forty times greater than they are, they would form no adequate compensation for my anxiety and vexations, aggravated by the uncandid treatment that I frequently experience within these walls. It is not love of power or of greatness that retains me in my place. I speak in the presence of individuals who know how little I am attached to either." * No one can doubt that there was truth in every one of these words. No one can doubt that, had it not been for the urgent entreaties of his Sovereign, and his settled conviction that the measures advocated by the Opposition were fraught with imminent peril to the Constitution, Lord North would long since have returned to that private station in

* Parl. Hist., vol. xxii. col. 1108.

which his many charming accomplishments and virtues so eminently qualified him to shine.

At all events, Lord North's desire for retirement was destined ere long to be gratified. The increasing weakness of the Government had been sufficiently manifested on Friday the 8th of March, when, on Lord John Cavendish bringing forward a string of Resolutions to the effect that the present calamities which afflicted the country were attributable to the incapacity of the Ministers of the Crown, a majority of ten only declared in their favour. This attack was followed by another which took place on Friday the 15th, when Sir John Rous, Member for Suffolk and a Tory, endeavoured to bring matters to a crisis, by proposing a direct vote of want of confidence in the Government. On this vital occasion a reduced majority of nine was all that Ministers were able to secure, and accordingly Lord North, perceiving that his Ministerial days were numbered, prepared to descend from power with proper dignity and spirit. His wish, he told the House, was not only for peace, but for an Administration that would act with unanimity and effect towards the general safety. He would form no obstacle to a Coalition in which he should have no share of power or place. There were those, he said, who well knew that for years past he had been ready and willing to make way for such an Administration, nor was it owing to any personal desire of his own that he had so long remained in his situation. "I declare to God," he exclaimed, "that no love of office or of emolument should detain me for a moment in place, if I could with honour leave it, and if certain circumstances, which I cannot now explain, did not prevent my resignation. A time may come, I flatter myself, when I can better speak upon this point. I act in obedience to a sense of duty, which neither persuasions nor menaces can influence me to abandon." *

* Parl. Hist., vol. xxii. cols. 1193—4.

In the mean time, as the speedy return of the great Whig Lords to power became more and more a matter of certainty, the King's distress and dissatisfaction may be readily imagined. Alluding to the Majority of "nine" he writes to Lord North on the 15th—"It looks as if the House of Commons are going lengths that could not have been expected. I am resolved not to throw myself into the hands of Opposition at all events, and shall certainly, if things go as they seem to tend, know what my conscience as well as honour dictates as the only way left for me." * Again the King writes on the 19th;—"After having yesterday in the most solemn manner assured you that my sentiments of honour would not permit me to send for any of the leaders of Opposition and personally treat with them, I could not but be hurt at your letter of last night. Every man must be the sole judge of his feelings; therefore whatever you *or any man can say has no avail with me.*" † This latter note was written on the eve of the memorable Wednesday the 20th of March, on which day the Earl of Surrey had engaged himself to propose a second vote of want of confidence in Ministers. That day had been impatiently expected both in and out of Parliament even more than by the King, and accordingly when four o'clock on the 20th arrived, there had assembled not fewer than four hundred Members of the House of Commons, each and all of them eager to listen to a debate which, in point of eloquence and party fierceness, threatened to match even the memorable one which, forty years previously had preceded the downfall of Sir Robert Walpole. It was a treat, however, of which they were destined to be disappointed. At the very time when the House was filling, Lord North was engaged in a long conference with the King at St. James's, towards the close of which he succeeded in wringing from his Majesty the

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 162.
† *Ibid.*

reluctant admission that, owing to the adverse spirit which pervaded the House of Commons, he considered it to be no longer in the power of his present servants to carry on the Government, and consequently that he regarded the Administration as at an end. "Then, Sir," enquired Lord North, "had I not better state the fact at once?" The King offering no further objections, Lord North hurried off to Westminster in his court dress and blue riband, for the purpose of announcing his resignation to, and arresting further hostile proceedings in, the House of Commons. *

While this scene had been passing at St. James's the House of Commons had been momentarily and anxiously expecting the appearance of the Prime Minister. Lord Surrey waited only for his arrival to commence his attack. Each time that the door of the House opened every eye was turned in that direction. When, at length, the Premier entered, loud cries of "order, order, places, places," accompanied him as he advanced towards the Treasury Benches, where he had scarcely seated himself for a few seconds before he again stood up and attempted to speak. Lord Surrey, however, who had a prior right to address the House, rose at the same moment, and as Lord North, notwithstanding the clamours of the Opposition, manifested an earnest determination not to give way, a scene of the greatest confusion was the consequence. At last, Charles Fox, having found means to secure a moment's hearing, moved that "the Earl of Surrey do now speak." "I rise to speak to that motion," was the pleasant and adroit rejoinder of Lord North, and having thus succeeded in gaining the ear of the House, he at once announced the unexpected and exciting intelligence that not only had he ceased to be First

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 295. On the preceding day the King had written to Lord North;—"Till I have heard what the Chancellor has done, from his own mouth, I shall take no step; and if you resign before I have decided what to do, YOU WILL CERTAINLY FOR EVER FORFEIT MY REGARD." *Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol. i. p. 163.

Minister of the Crown, but that it was the intention of his Majesty to effect an entire change in the Administration. He then, with great feeling and tact, thanked the House for the kindness, forbearance, and indulgence, which for so many years he had experienced at their hands. His Sovereign, he said, would probably find it easy enough to supply his place with a Minister of sounder judgment and more brilliant abilities; but one more jealous of the honour of his country, one more anxious to advance its interests, and to maintain the Constitution inviolate, or one animated by more devoted feelings of loyalty towards his Sovereign, his Majesty would discover some difficulty in obtaining. Whoever, he continued, might be the individuals appointed to succeed him and his colleagues in the Ministry, he trusted their measures might be such as to extricate their common country from its present critical situation, to render her happy and prosperous at home, and honoured and glorious abroad. As regarded his past conduct as a Minister, he was aware, he said, that he was responsible for whatever measures he might have adopted. He had often been threatened with an investigation into his public conduct, but so far was he from shrinking from such an inquiry, that he would ever be ready to encounter it, let the ordeal be what it might. Lastly, he moved that the House adjourn for some days, in order to afford his Majesty time to effect such changes in the Administration as he might deem proper.

No Minister of this country, not even Sir Robert Walpole, ever laid down power and retired into private life, with a more becoming cheerfulness and grace, than Lord North. His wit and good-humour never shone to greater advantage than in the season of his defeat and disgrace. For instance, on the night on which he communicated the fall of the Ministry to the House of Commons, the snow happened to be falling thick and uninterruptedly; entailing much un-

expected discomfort upon the greater number of the Members, who, in anticipation of a long debate, had dispensed with the attendance of their equipages till a much later hour. Accordingly, on the breaking up of the House, the only carriage visible was that of the ex-minister who as he stepped into it, could not refrain from casting back a look of good-humoured triumph upon the throng of luckless senators, chiefly his bitterest political enemies, who crowded the passage and doorway. "Good night, gentlemen," he said; "you see the advantage of being in the secret."* "No man," writes his friend Mr. Adam, "ever showed more calmness, cheerfulness, and serenity. The temper of his whole family was the same. I dined with them that day and was witness to it." † When, a few days after his resignation, a friend expressed some surprise at the unexpected event, Lord North is said to have smilingly applied to himself the words which Shakespeare places in the mouth of Cardinal Wolsey—

> "What! amazed
> At my misfortunes? Can thy spirit wonder
> A great man should decline."
>
> *King Henry 8. Act 3. Scene 2.*

Even on the painful and embarrassing occasion of his taking his final leave of the King, his accustomed pleasantry did not fail him. When he entered the royal closet the rain happened to be falling in torrents. "Have you been out to-day—have you been out to-day?"—enquired the King with that hurried nervous utterance which was usual with him when suffering from distress of mind. "Sir," replied the fallen Minister, "I was turned out yesterday. I would not turn a dog out such a day as this." According to the questionable authority of Horace Walpole, the King's manner to Lord North on this occasion

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 296.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 295.

was ungracious almost to rudeness. "Remember, my Lord," are said to have been his parting words, "it is you that desert me, not I you."*

By the resignation of Lord North, the King was placed not only in an embarrassing, but in a most humiliating position. Not only, within the last few weeks, had he emphatically declared that "no difficulties" should induce him to consent to a Peace at the expense of separation from America, but, as we have seen, he had much more recently, and twice over, expressed his fixed determination "not to throw himself into the hands of Opposition."† After such protestations as these, the sacrifices, which he was now required to make, of summoning to his presence individuals who were not only pledged to the Independence of America, but who had rendered themselves personally obnoxious to him, must have occasioned him the bitterest mortification. So distressing was the conflict which prevailed in his mind, that he not only contemplated exchanging the crown of Great Britain for a calm retirement in his Electoral dominions, but orders for fitting out the royal yacht with all expedition for sea, are said to have been actually issued. ‡

At the time of Lord North's resignation, the great Opposition party may be said to have consisted of two sections. At the head of one was Charles Marquis of Rockingham,

* Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 521. As this anecdote appears to rest on the sole authority of Walpole, it is as well again to point out, and, indeed, constantly to bear in mind, the inveterate aversion which that author, in his writings, almost invariably displays towards his Sovereign.

† See *ante*, p. 345.

‡ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 520; Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 183. "The present King George the Fourth," writes Lord Holland, "told me a story of his father's plan of retiring to Hanover, and described, with more humour than filial reverence, his arrangement of the details, and especially of the liveries and dresses, about which he was so earnest that it amounted almost to insanity. The period, however, of these strange fancies was, I think, that of Lord George Gordon's riots, not of the fall of Lord North's Ministry. Perhaps he might have talked of such a project on both occasions, and he was more likely to communicate his half-formed intentions to his son in 1780 than in 1782." *Memorials of Fox*, vol. i. p. 287, *note*.

whose constitutional diffidence, and want of abilities of a high order, were to a great extent atoned for by his great territorial possessions, his Parliamentary influence, his excellent common sense, and his unimpeachable integrity in public, as well as in private life. His principal supporters in Parliament were Edmund Burke, Charles James Fox, and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, men whose brilliant talents and marvellous eloquence more than made amends for the want of those qualities in their leader.

The chief of the other, and less powerful, section of the great Whig party was William Earl of Shelburne, afterwards first Marquis of Lansdowne, a nobleman undoubtedly gifted with many of those high qualities, which are requisite to fit a Minister to rise to the highest office in the State. His figure was commanding; his address insinuating. Neither his political nor his personal courage were ever called in question. A certain grace attached to him as a lover of literature and the arts, and an encourager of science. His oratorical powers were considerable. When William Pitt, then a boy, first listened to him in the House of Lords, it was with the greatest admiration. "Lord Shelburne," he writes to his mother Lady Chatham, "was as great as possible. His speech was one of the most interesting and forcible, I think, I ever heard, or even can imagine."* Moreover, Lord Shelburne had the advantage of possessing great political knowledge and administrative experience. With foreign affairs perhaps no statesmen of his age was more conversant. Lastly he had not only closely studied, and made himself a complete master of finance, but the proud distinction has been awarded him of having been the first British statesman to comprehend and advocate the great principles of Free Trade.† But

* Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. p. 438.

† See "Essays on the Administrations of Great Britain," by the late Sir George C. Lewis, p. 50, *note*.

unhappily, if Lord Shelburne's contemporaries are to be credited, these eminent qualities were thrown into the shade by an insincerity which amounted to a profound and systematic duplicity. Men, as is well known, nicknamed him Malagrida, after a celebrated Italian Jesuit of that name. The King himself in one of his letters speaks of him as a "Jesuit of Berkeley Square."*

The principal persons who regarded Lord Shelburne as their leader were the high-minded Lord Camden, Colonel Barré, and John Dunning, afterwards Lord Ashburton. As these statesmen constituted the remnant of the party which had followed the banner of the illustrious Chatham, it was natural that his son, William Pitt, should ally himself to this section of the Whig party, instead of to that of which Lord Rockingham was the chief. It was natural also, considering Lord Shelburne's Parliamentary abilities and experience, and his ardent desire to prevent the separation of America from Great Britain, that the King should desire to see him at the head of his councils, rather than the nominee of Charles Fox and of the more thorough-going Whigs. Nevertheless, on the resignation of Lord North, the King caused overtures to be in the first instance made, through the Chancellor, to Lord Rockingham, whose terms, however, proved so hard, and who demanded such sweeping changes in the Government, that the negotiation was broken off almost as soon as it commenced. "Lord Rockingham," said the Chancellor, "was bringing things to a pass where either his head or the King's must go, in order to settle

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 129. Edition, 1858. Malagrida was strangled and burnt at Lisbon in 1761. "'Do you know,' once inquired Goldsmith of Lord Shelburne, 'that I never could conceive the reason why they call your lordship Malagrida, for Malagrida was a very good sort of man?'" *Hardy's Life of Lord Charlemont*, vol. i. p. 345. Goldsmith's real meaning was explained as follows by Dr. Johnson;—"Goldsmith's blundering speech to Shelburne, which has been so often mentioned, and which he really did make to him, was only a blunder in emphasis; it meant, 'I wonder they should use *Malagrida* as a term of reproach.'" *Croker's Boswell's Life of Johnson*, pp. 715—6. Edition, 1848.

which of them was to govern the country."* The King now applied to Lord Shelburne to form an Administration, but with the same unsatisfactory result, and accordingly in his distress he sent for Earl Gower. That nobleman, however, although not devoid of ambition, was either "too indolent or too timid to accept the post;" † thus reducing the King to the humiliating necessity of summoning Lord Shelburne a second time to his presence. Lord Shelburne on this occasion very properly and judiciously recommended the King to send for Lord Rockingham; his own party, he said, not only being the weaker of the two, but he himself having many personal enemies, whereas Lord Rockingham had none. "If," writes Walpole, "he undertakes, he will carry very little strength, but ample unpopularity." Lord Shelburne himself subsequently remarked to Lord Rockingham, "My Lord, you can stand without me, but I cannot without you."‡

When Lord Shelburne quitted the royal closet, it was with full powers to treat with Lord Rockingham as to men and measures, and with the distinct understanding that the latter nobleman was to be placed at the head of the Treasury. Thus far the King's conduct had been both constitutional and proper; but unfortunately, so exasperated was he at the exorbitant demands which had been lately made upon him by the Marquis—moreover, so morbidly reluctant was he to renew his personal intercourse with a nobleman whose power he feared no less than he despised his abilities—that instead of sending for, and receiving him, with a good grace, he expressed his determination not to admit him into the royal closet till after the completion of his Ministerial arrangements. So marked a manifestation of displeasure and distrust could scarcely fail to have the double

* Extracts from Mr. Adams's MSS. in *Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox*, vol. i. p. 295.

† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. pp. 521, 522.

‡ Walpole's Corresp., vol. viii. p. 183; Last Journals, vol. ii. pp. 522, 523.

effect of wounding the pride of Lord Rockingham, and of lowering him in the estimation of the public, and accordingly his first impulse was to reject the high post so ungraciously proffered to him by his Sovereign. Urgently, however, and earnestly it was represented to him by the Duke of Richmond and Fox that his rejection of the Premiership would be attributed by the public either to personal pique, or to jealousy of Lord Shelburne, and consequently, by this and by other arguments, he was induced, though not without some difficulty, to forego his objections. On the following day, Dr. Watson, the Whig Bishop of Llandaff, dined with him at his residence in Grosvenor Square, when the new Premier confided to him the principal measures which it was his intention to press upon the consideration of the King and Parliament. They consisted for the most part, of the acknowledgement of American Independence, the curtailment of the influence of the Crown, the disqualifying Contractors for becoming Members of the House of Commons, the exclusion of revenue officers from the privilege of voting at Parliamentary elections, the abolition of sinecure offices, and the introduction of a general and stringent system of economy into the several Departments of the State.* No mention, it will be perceived, was made by the Marquis of that great desideratum, Parliamentary Reform, and consequently the debt of gratitude which England owes Lord Rockingham, as the enlightened champion of liberal measures, is far less than it might otherwise have been. Mar. 25.

At length on the 27th of March, Lord Rockingham, in a personal interview to which he was admitted in the royal closet, was enabled to submit the names of the proposed members of the new Cabinet to the King. The list consisted of Lord Rockingham as First Lord of the Treasury; of Lord Shelburne and Fox as Secretaries of State; of Lord

* Bishop Watson's Anecdotes of his Life, vol. i. pp. 144—5. See also *Rockingham Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 452—3.

John Cavendish as Chancellor of the Exchequer; of Lord Camden as President of the Council; the Duke of Grafton as Privy Seal; General Conway as Commander in Chief; Admiral Keppel as First Lord of the Admiralty; the Duke of Richmond as Master General of the Ordnance; and Dunning, the new Lord Ashburton, as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Thus, it will be perceived, five members of the new Cabinet belonged to the Rockingham party and five, if we may include General Conway, to the Shelburne party. Lord Thurlow was permitted to retain the Great Seal. The Duke of Portland was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; Colonel Barré Treasurer of the Navy, and Sheridan Under Secretary of State. The Whigs, since their last tenure of office, had foregone none of their ancient aristocratic exclusiveness. Even Burke, matchless as was his genius, was denied a seat in a Cabinet, which, had it not been for his brilliant eloquence and untiring literary and Parliamentary antagonism, might never have been called into existence. The post apportioned to him was that of Paymaster of the Forces. To William Pitt was tendered the lucrative situation of Vice Treasurer of Ireland, but he had previously, and somewhat presumptuously, declared in the House of Commons, that he would accept no subordinate post* under any Government,† and accordingly, although his private means consisted of no more than three hundred a year, the offer was unhesitatingly refused. On the 30th of March, the new arrangements were gazetted

* Meaning no office which did not entitle him to a seat in the Cabinet. Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 66. Ed. 1821.

† "So arrogant a declaration," observes Walpole, "from a boy who had gained no experience from, nor ever enjoyed even the lowest post in any office, and who for half a dozen orations, extraordinary indeed—but no evidence of capacity for business—presumed himself fit for command, proved that he was a boy, and a very ambitious and a very vain one. The moment he sat down he was aware of his folly, and said he could bite his tongue out for what it had uttered." *Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 514. Yet in less than twelve months after his making this famous declaration it fell to the lot of "the boy" to be not only offered, but to refuse the Premiership.

with the usual phraseology—"The King has been pleased to constitute and appoint the most honourable Charles Marquis of Rockingham, Lord John Cavendish, &c., &c.," —"*Pleased!*" is said to have been Lord North's exclamation on reading the Gazette—"why! I have often been abused for lying Gazettes, yet there are more lies in this single Gazette than in all mine put together."*

It was on the same day, the 27th of March, on which the King was reduced to admit Lord Rockingham into the royal closet, that he addressed the following affectionate notes to the two statesmen whom he personally loved the best, and with whose services he the most reluctantly dispensed;—

The King to the Earl of Dartmouth.

"*27th March*, 1782.

"Lord Dartmouth,

"Though I have directed Lord North this morning to acquaint all the Cabinet that they must come and resign their respective Offices before the levee this day, as I think it would make an odd medley to see some there kissing hands whilst others are to resign, therefore I shall, if possible, be at St. James's before one for *that melancholy purpose.*

"I own I could not let Lord Dartmouth hear this without writing him a few lines to aver how very near he will always be to my heart, and that I have ever esteemed him since I have thoroughly known him in another light than any of his companions in Ministry. What days it has pleased the Almighty to place me in! when Lord Dartmouth can be a man to be removed but at his own request. But I cannot complain. I adore the Will of Providence, and will ever resign myself obediently to His Will. My heart is too full to say more." †

The King to Lord North.

"*March* 27, 1782.

"At length the fatal day is come which the misfortunes of the times, and the sudden change of sentiments of the House

* Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 211.

† Quarterly Review, vol. cv. p. 475.

of Commons, have driven me to, of changing my Ministers, and a more general removal of other persons than, I believe, ever was known before. I have to the last fought for individuals, but the number I have saved, except my Bedchamber, is incredibly few. You will hardly believe that even the Duke of Montagu* was strongly run at, but I declared that I would sooner let confusion follow than part with the late Governor of my sons and so unexceptionable a man; so that he and Lord Ashburnham remain.† The effusion of my sorrows has made me say more than I intended; but I ever did, and ever shall, look on you as a friend, as well as a faithful servant."‡

It will be seen by this letter, that although the King, in the height of his distress, may possibly have been provoked into expressing himself in language of irritation on parting with Lord North, his affections had not been alienated from his old servant. One of the few conditions, indeed, for which he had stipulated with Lord Rockingham, had been a pension for his retiring favourite. "I have de-
Mar. 26. clared," writes the King to Lord North, "to those *who are to form an Administration* that no provision will be made except for you and Mr. Robinson."§ Considering, indeed, the long and intimate intercourse which had existed between the King and Lord North, it is difficult to believe that they could have parted without feelings of affectionate regret on both sides. Their intimacy had, from many causes, been of a much closer nature than usually exists between a sovereign and the chief of his councils. As boys they had associated among the lilacs and seringas at Kew, and had performed in the same juvenile dramatic performances at Leicester House.|| In some respects they resembled each

* Master of the Horse from December 1780 to December 1790.

† John second Earl of Ashburnham, Groom of the Stole, died 8 April 1812, at the age of eighty-eight.

‡ Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 163. § *Ibid.*

|| In 1741, we find George the Third, then Prince George, performing the character of *Portius* to Lord North's *Sypkax*, in Addison's classical play of "Cato." See Letters of Mary Lepel, Lady Hervey, p. 147, note, and also *ante*, vol. i. pp. 4, 5. In

other, not only in countenance but in disposition. Lord North, on his part, could scarcely fail to be grateful to his Sovereign for the flattering confidence, support, and affection, which he had so long extended to him; while, on the other hand, we know that the King never ceased to acknowledge the great obligations under which he lay to Lord North, for having come to his assistance when the Duke of Grafton had deserted him in 1770. Finally, during the last eventful twelve years of their lives, they had fought the same battles, incurred the same odium, and shared the same hazards. "If I was asked," writes the late King of Hanover, "which Minister the King during my life gave the preference to, I should say Lord North. But the Coalition broke up that connection and he never forgave him."*

the course of the performance, each had to repeat some lines prophetic of their friendship in after years.

Portius. ——"the friendships of the world are oft
Confederacies in vice, or leagues of pleasure;
Ours has severest virtue for its basis,
And such a friendship ends not but with life."
Act 3. *Sc.* 1.

And again,

Syphax. "Our first design, my friend, has proved abortive,
Still there remains an after-game to play."
Act 3. *Sc.* 1.

* MS. Letter to Mr. Croker.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The New Ministers in the House of Commons—The King's dislike to his new Advisers, especially to Mr. Fox—The Prince of Wales—His Pursuits and Associates—His Intimacy with Fox—His support of Opposition in the House of Lords—His Dissolute Habits and Undutiful Conduct to his Father—The New Administration—Ministerial Jealousies and Dissensions—Pitt's motion for Enquiry into the State of the Representation of the People in Parliament—Death of the Premier, Lord Rockingham—Lord Shelburne appointed Premier—Resignation of Fox—Fox's Political Influence impaired by this Proceeding.

It was on the afternoon of the 8th of April, that the new Ministers took their places on the Treasury benches of the House of Commons. As they walked, one by one, up the House, their appearance attracted a good deal of observation and even mirth. In those days, etiquette prescribed that the Ministers of the Crown should present themselves in Parliament in Court dresses; and accordingly when Lord North and his late colleagues took their seats on the Opposition Benches, wearing greatcoats and boots, and when, on the other hand, the new servants of the Crown appeared on the Ministerial side of the House arrayed in the livery of a Court of which they had been so long the systematic opponents, the sensation which the contrast presented may be readily imagined. Most remarkable among them were the figures of Fox and Burke who, in lieu of their former blue and buff uniforms, the distinguishing colours of the American patriots, now appeared in their new places pranked out in laced ruffles, swords, and perfumed hair-powder. This double transformation, according to an eye witness, presented one of the most amusing scenes he had ever wit-

nessed. It produced, among other pleasantries, a joke from Lord Nugent which rapidly circulated through, and occasioned much merriment in, the House. It happened that his lordship's house in Great George Street had recently been broken into by thieves, on which occasion, among other articles carried off, had been several pairs of laced ruffles, which, having been publicly and extensively advertised and minutely described, had rendered the robbery familiar to every reader of a newspaper. When, therefore, in the course of the evening, a friend happened to enquire of Lord Nugent whether he had discovered any trace of his stolen property, the eye of the wit naturally glanced towards the new Ministers. "Why," he said, "I cannot exactly say that I have; yet I shrewdly suspect that I see some of my ruffles on the hands of the gentlemen now occupying the Treasury Benches." *

The King, in addition to his general aversion to the Whigs as a party, imagined that he had many good reasons, personal as well as political, for being offended with, and disliking his new Ministers. He disliked them, because he believed the measures which they advocated to be pregnant with peril to the Constitution; because he felt that the inflammatory language delivered by them for a long time past in Parliament—language too often, it is to be feared, spoken for mere party purposes—had gone far to incite the Americans to rebellion; and, lastly, because the Administration which they had forced upon him, instead of being a compact and vigorous one, already carried within it the seeds of dissension and debility. Moreover, there were those among his new servants who had rendered themselves individually obnoxious to him. The Duke of Grafton's abandonment of the Government in 1770 still rankled in the King's mind. Lord Shelburne had not only made a personal attack upon him, two years previously, in

* Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. iii. pp. 27, 28.

the House of Lords,* but had recently given him additional offence by an exasperating tirade which he had delivered in that House against Lords North and Stormont.† Lord John Cavendish, we are told, "was now punishing the King on account of the treatment his brother, the late Duke of Devonshire, had met with from the Court in 1762,"‡ while of the Duke of Richmond the King complained that he had behaved towards him with "unremitted
July 3, 1780. personal ill-conduct."—"Persons," writes the King to Lord North, "must atone for their faults before I can attempt to forgive them. The Duke of Richmond has not put his foot into my apartments for seven years; but, not content with this, sent me a message by Lord Weymouth that, though he never came near me, he as a Lieutenant General, asked my leave to go to France."§ Of the other members of the Administration, Dunning, whom the King had been compelled to raise to the peerage, had been the proposer of the famous Resolution for diminishing the influence of the Crown. Burgoyne, the new Commander in Chief of the forces in Ireland, had recently by implication charged his Sovereign in Parliament with entertaining dangerous designs, not only against the British Constitution, but against the universal Rights of Mankind.‖ Burke, though the King had formerly wished to have him in his service, ¶

* "By coming late," writes General Fitzpatrick to Lord Ossory, 2 December 1779, "I lost the first half of Lord Shelburne's speech, but what I heard I thought excellent; very violent, and very personal to the King; in short a counterpart of Charles's in the House of Commons." *Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox*, vol. i. p. 239.

† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 524.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 589, *note*. See *ante*, vol. i. pp. 143—5.

§ Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 149. Before the Duke's subsequent acceptance of the office of Master General of the Ordnance in Lord Rockingham's ministry, he addressed an apologetic, and rather remarkable letter to that nobleman, for the purpose of being shown to the King. It will be found in the Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. p. 467.

‖ Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 463, 3rd Edition.

¶ "Messrs. Townshend and Burke would be real acquisitions." *The King to Lord North*, 3 *July* 1780: *Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol. i. p. 149.

had recently become a zealous advocate for curtailing the patronage, and with it the power, of the Crown; while, Lord Rockingham, in consequence of his moderate abilities and dilatory mode of transacting business, could scarcely expect to be a favourite with a monarch by whom industry and activity were regarded as indispensable qualities in his public servants, and whose own eye was constantly fixed on every Department of the State.

But, of all the new appointments, that of Charles Fox to be Secretary of State was doubtless by far the most unpalatable to George the Third. So early as the year 1772 Fox, then a very young man, had deeply offended his Sovereign by resigning his seat at the Board of Admiralty for the purpose of opposing the Royal Marriage Act, the passing of which measure the King is known to have regarded as no less essential to his own happiness and peace of mind, than to the well-ordering of the royal family. "I expect," he writes to Lord North, "every nerve to be strained to carry the Bill. It is not a question relating to Administration, but personally to myself, therefore I have a right to expect a hearty support from every one in my service, and I shall remember defaulters." * Moreover, in the eyes of the King, Fox's offence was not a little aggravated by the democratic principles which, even at this early period, he had begun to advocate. "Charles Fox," writes Gibbon to Lord Sheffield, "is commenced patriot, and is already attempting to pronounce the words *country, liberty, corruption*, &c., with what success time will discover: yesterday he resigned the Admiralty." † Within less than a year, indeed, he re-entered the Ministerial ranks

Feb. 26, 1772.

Feb. 21, 1772.

* Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 79.

† Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works, p. 246. Edition, 1837. George Selwyn, overhearing a member of the Opposition exulting over Fox's desertion of the Court, sarcastically observed—"You have no reason to triumph. You will be forced to pay his debts, as you did Wilkes's, or you will lose him again." *Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox*, vol. i. p. 75. Respecting the allusion to the payment of Wilkes's debts by the Opposition, see *ante*, vol. i. pp. 421—2.

as a Lord of the Treasury, but in, as well as out of office, his conduct continued to be such as to displease and irritate his Sovereign. We may mention for instance the "indecent arrogance" * with which he pressed the prosecution of Woodfall, the printer, contrary to the wishes of his colleagues, and to the convictions of the House of Commons—conduct which could not fail to be embarrassing to the Government, and which consequently was certain to give offence to the King. Accordingly on the 16th of February 1774 we find the latter writing to Lord North—"I am greatly *incensed* at the presumption of Charles Fox in forcing you to vote with him last night, but approve much of your making your friends vote in the majority. Indeed, that young man has so thoroughly cast off every principle of common honour and honesty, that he must become as contemptible as he is odious. I hope you will let him know you are not insensible of his conduct towards you."† Again, on the 23rd, the King writes—"I think Mr. Charles Fox would have acted more becomingly to you and himself, if he had absented himself from the House; for his conduct is not to be attributed to conscience,
Feb. 24. but to his aversion to all restraint." ‡ The next day, Fox was dismissed from his seat at the Treasury.

Such treatment, whether deserved or not, the young statesman was little likely either to forget or forgive. From this period, then, till his accession to high office in 1782, Fox had continued to wage an incessant and unsparing war against the Court; nor, as his prospects of succeeding to power had begun to brighten, had his language or conduct become less intemperate. In addition to the frightful picture which, it will be remembered, he drew of his Sovereign at the commencement of the present Ses-

* Walpole's Last Journals, vol. i. p. 306.
† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 84.
‡ *Ibid.*

sion,* we find him on the 22nd of February, only five weeks before he kissed hands as Secretary of State, insisting in no less insulting terms on the existence of an "infernal spirit," which, he said, in reality ruled and "had nearly ruined the country." † Nay, on the very evening of his becoming a Minister and an adviser of the Crown, he had been bold enough to challenge one of its most essential prerogatives. Let the new Ministers, he said, bear in mind that they *owed their situations to the House of Commons.* ‡ Very possibly, had the King and Fox been afforded opportunities of associating in private life, they would not only have understood each other better, and valued each other more, but, by mutual forbearance and concession they might together have formed a Government as strong and durable as that which subsequently existed under the ministration of the younger Pitt. It might be argued that Fox was the advocate of measures to which it was very unlikely that the King would consent; yet, after all, Fox's political opinions at this time were scarcely more liberal than those of Pitt; and Pitt, be it remembered, before the close of the following year, was not only selected by the King to be his first Minister, but, during the seventeen years that he filled that post, continued to enjoy the full confidence and support of his Sovereign. Unfortunately, however, the King and Fox regarded one another through a distorted medium. The King, on his part, could have had but little knowledge of those many estimable and endearing qualities which lay under the surface of Fox's libertinism and clamorous advocacy of the sovereignty of the people. He had never known him—

——"in his happier hour
Of social pleasure ill exchanged for power."

* See *ante*, p. 334.

† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 507.

‡ Sir George C. Lewis's Essays on the Administrations of Great Britain, p. 28.

He had never been captivated by the charm of his wonderful eloquence; he had never been afforded an opportunity of observing, and appreciating, that entire freedom from all rancour, affectation, and duplicity, that humane and benevolent disposition, that redeeming enthusiasm for the classical lore of ancient and modern times, and that genial wit, and those playful manners, which rendered him the ornament and the idol of every circle in which he moved. Fox, on the other hand, had been equally devoid of opportunities of noting and admiring the simple virtues, the homely tastes, the domestic affections, the stainless morality, the cheerful, unaffected manners, the humble piety, the vigorous understanding, the calm and dignified fearlessness in the hour of peril, and the unwearying industry in the service of his subjects, which were the characteristics of George the Third. Unhappily, owing to Fox's own irregularities and imprudences, the King had been led to regard him in no better light than as an unprincipled and abandoned profligate, a needy and ambitious place-hunter, whose eloquence scarcely rose higher than "noisy declamation," which, to use the King's own words, prevented "real business" in the House of Commons.* Nor does Fox's estimate of the character of the King appear to have been of a much more flattering description. Incensed alike at the King's undisguised aversion towards himself, and at the pertinacity by which he had so long succeeded in excluding the great Whig Families from power, Fox had taught himself to look upon his Sovereign as a mere, dull, obstinate, half-crazed and narrow-minded bigot; a Prince, whose shallow understanding had never been improved by education, whose prejudices

* On the 15th of November 1776. Again, the King writes to Lord North on the 3rd of July 1780;—"As to Mr. Fox, if any lucrative, not ministerial office, can be pointed out for him, provided he will support the measures of Government, I shall have no objection to the proposition. He never had any principle, and can therefore act as his interest may guide him." *Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol. i. pp. 96, 149.

it was impossible to remove, and whose resentments it would be idle to endeavour to soften.

Independent of Fox's political delinquencies and personal libertinism, there were grounds, of a more delicate nature, which were calculated to render the tribune of the people especially objectionable to George the Third. At the time when Fox and his friends were installed in office in March, 1782, the Prince of Wales—gay, handsome, agreeable, and clever—was in the twentieth year of his age. The King had been doatingly fond of his first-born when a child. He had caused him to be educated with the greatest care and attention, and had watched over his spiritual welfare with the most anxious solicitude. The good seed, however, had fallen upon unfruitful soil. The Prince no sooner found himself emancipated from the ungenial tedium and restraint of Kew Palace and Buckingham House, than he commenced giving the deepest pain and offence to his father, not only by plunging into every kind of debauchery;* but by advocating the political principles of his father's bitterest enemies. At the age of eighteen he was the accepted paramour of the famous "Perdita," the gifted and ill-fated Mary Robinson.† Before he was twenty, he had employed his influence in carrying the Windsor election against the Court. Unhappily, too, his libertinism was not the libertinism of a

* See Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. pp. 446—7, 449—50, 457—9.

† Mary Darby, afterwards Mrs. Robinson, once so famous for her beauty, her talents, and her misfortunes, was the daughter of a captain of a merchant-vessel trading from the port of Bristol, who, having fallen into pecuniary difficulties, subsequently entered the naval service of Russia, in which he died captain of a line of battle ship. She received her first education at the school kept by the Misses More near Bristol, afterwards rendered celebrated by the genius and virtues of their sister, Hannah. At the age of fifteen she became the wife of a profligate attorney, named Robinson, who neglected her, and who, having ruined himself by his extravagance, became the inmate of a prison. In her difficulties she adopted the stage as a profession, on which, under the patronage of the Duchess of Devonshire and David Garrick, she achieved a considerable reputation. Her representation of *Perdita* in the "Winter's Tale," in which character she captivated the young Prince of Wales, is said to have been admirable. Hence, too, the Prince derived his *sobriquet* of Florizel. Mrs. Robinson was the authoress of several works of fiction in prose; of a tragedy called

gentleman. To be carried home drunk, or to be taken into custody by the watch, were apparently no very unfrequent episodes in the early career of the heir to the throne. Under the auspices of his weak and frivolous uncle, the Duke of Cumberland, the Prince's conversation is said to have been a compound of the slang of grooms, and the wanton vocabulary of a brothel. The Duke—who, in allusion to his nephew's Welsh principality, had the bad taste to style his nephew familiarly "Taffy"—kept a faro-bank for his amusement at Cumberland House, in Pall Mall; carried him to the lowest scenes of debauchery, and even introduced money-lenders, and still worse characters, into the Prince's apartments at Buckingham House. Moreover it was under the Duke's influence that the Prince's conduct towards his father became marked, not only by disobedience, but by the most undutiful contempt. The fact of the King's constant attendance in the hunting-field at this period was attributed, by those who knew him best, to a double desire to enjoy more of the society of his son, and to keep him out of the way of evil companions. Yet even this touching proof of parental affection and care produced no good effect, either upon his graceless heir or his still more graceless brother. The King's hour of dining, when resident at Windsor, was at this time three o'clock, and when in London four o'clock; yet the Prince, as if with the purpose of exposing his father to the comments, if not the derision, of the royal household, rarely made his appearance at

the Sicilian Lover, and of numerous poetical minor pieces, many of which are distinguished by taste and feeling. Her connexion with the Prince of Wales commenced in 1780, when she was in her twenty-third year, and terminated in 1783. Not long afterwards, she was seized with a rheumatic fever, which completely crippled her to the last hours of her life. Her death took place at her house at Englefield Green on the 28th of December 1800, in the forty-third year of her age. Her remains, at her own especial request, were interred in the churchyard of Old Windsor. For the principal particulars stated in this brief notice of Mrs. Robinson, see the curious Memoirs of her, chiefly autobiographical, in volume vii. of the Collection of Autobiographies printed for Messrs. Hunt and Clarke, London 1826.

the former place till four o'clock, or, at the latter place till five. "When we hunt together," said the King to the Duke of Gloucester, "neither my son nor my brother speak to me; and lately, when the chase ended at a little village where there was but a single post-chaise to be hired, my son and brother got into it, and drove to London, leaving me to go home in a cart if I could find one." * It should be remembered, for more reasons than one, that this domestic unhappiness, and these cruel indignities, were forced upon the King, not only by his nearest relatives, but at a period when his head was already bowed to the earth by the near prospect of the dismemberment of the great Empire which had been committed to his charge, and by the impending dissolution of his favourite Ministry. The King was indeed placed in a most painful position. When the Duke of Gloucester expressed some surprise to him at his submitting so patiently to the affronts which were put upon him—"What would you have me do in my present distress?" was his reply; "if I did not bear it, it would only drive my son into opposition, which would increase my distresses." †

But it was not so much to the precepts and example of the frivolous Duke of Cumberland, as to those of the brilliant and fascinating Fox, that the King is said to have ascribed the profligate training and unfilial conduct of his first-born. It has even been affirmed, that when the Prince conceived his boyish passion for Mrs. Robinson, Fox not only acted too friendly and accommodating a part on the occasion, but that the King's knowledge of this discreditable fact was the main cause of his personal aversion to the man whom he regarded as his son's destroyer. ‡ It is but fair, however, to Fox's memory, to endeavour to relieve him from this apparently unsubstantiated charge. It should be men-

* Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. pp. 480—1. † *Ibid.*, p. 481.
‡ Quarterly Review, vol. cv. p. 481.

tioned then, that both in the King's correspondence, as well as in Mrs. Robinson's Memoirs of Herself, the only one of the Prince's friends who is mentioned as having been a go-between on the occasion is Lord Malden;* whereas, had Fox had any share in the discreditable transaction, there can be little doubt that the King would have included his name in some of the angry comments which we find him addressing to Lord North on the subject. "My eldest son," he writes to Lord North on the 20th of August, 1781, "got last year into an improper connexion with an actress and woman of indifferent character through the friendly assistance of Lord Malden. He sent her letters and very foolish promises which undoubtedly by her conduct she has cancelled."† Moreover, the inference would seem to be that it was not till more than two years after the Prince had been introduced to Mrs. Robinson that Fox made her personal acquaintance, when he certainly became her ardent admirer. Three times during the year 1782—in the months of August, September, and November—we find Walpole alluding to Fox's passion as a well-known conviction of the time. In September he writes to Lord Harcourt, "Charles Fox is languishing at the feet of Mrs. Robinson."‡ It was this gossip which elicited from George Selwyn one of those happy conceits for which he was so celebrated. "Who should the Man of the People," he said, "live with but the woman of the people."§

Another offence, which has been imputed to Fox, was

* George Capel Coningsby, afterwards fifth Earl of Essex, was born on the 13th of November 1757, and accordingly he was only in his twenty-third year when, according to Mrs. Robinson's version of the affair, he unexpectedly waited upon her with a direct avowal on the part of the Prince of his passion for her. The Earl, whose second Countess was the celebrated vocalist Miss Stephens, died 23 April 1838.

† Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. p. 159. It appears by this communication that what the King justly calls the "enormous sum" of 5000*l.* was paid by him for the recovery of the Prince's letters.

‡ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. pp. 569, 573. Letters, vol. viii. p. 276.

§ Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 277. These evidences of Fox's passion for Mrs. Robinson derive further corroboration from a scarce and scandalous little volume of

his presumed share in inducing the Prince of Wales to join the ranks of the Opposition. Fox, however, on more than one occasion solemnly denied the truth of the allegation. So far, he told Lord Malmesbury, from either the Duke of Portland or himself having any desire to enlist the Prince on the side of Opposition, they had repeatedly endeavoured to impress on the mind of his Royal Highness, that a Prince of Wales should declare himself of no party whatever.* This assurance Fox, in 1783, repeated personally to the King. On no single occasion, he protested, had he ever instigated the Prince to disobedience; on no single occasion had he ever uttered a word upon political topics which he should be unwilling that his Majesty should overhear. The Lord Chancellor, according to Fox, was the author of the false aspersions which had been allowed to find their way to his Majesty's ear.†

But though we may acquit Fox of the graver charges to which we have referred, there seems, on the other hand, to be little doubt, but that his brilliant society and dangerous example were, indirectly, only too well calculated to influence the conduct, and to contaminate the morals of the giddy heir to the throne. Senior to the Prince by thirteen years—immoderately addicted to women and the play-table—delighting in conviviality and wild frolic—a spendthrift of his means, whenever he possessed any—and lastly, by his wit, his genius, and amiability, casting a glittering though artificial, light over his libertinism, it was little to be expected that the Prince should pass unscathed through so perilous an ordeal as Charles Fox's friendship. That they lived in the closest intimacy there is ample evidence to prove. For instance, before the Prince had completed

the time, entitled "The Festival of Wit," p. 118. The compiler of its contents has the impudence to state on the title-page that they were "procured and selected by K—— G——;" of course implying the King.

* Lord Malmesbury's Diaries and Corresp., vol. ii. p. 75; 2nd Edition.

† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 613.

his twentieth year we find him "drinking royally" with Fox, at the rooms of the latter in St. James's Street;* the Prince was a member of Brooks's Club, of which Fox was the oracle and the idol; and, lastly, from a very early period, we find the Prince's letters to Fox familiarly addressed to him as "Dear Charles." "The Prince of Wales," writes Walpole, "had thrown himself into the arms of Charles, and this in the most indecent and undisguised manner. Fox lodged in St. James's Street, and as soon as he rose, which was very late, had a levee of his followers, and of the members of the Gaming Club, at Brooks's, all his disciples. His bristly black person, and shagged breast quite open, and rarely purified by any ablutions, was wrapped in a foul linen night-gown, and his bushy hair dishevelled. In these cynic weeds, and with epicurean good humour, did he dictate his politics, and in this school did the heir of the Crown attend his lessons and imbibe them."† Doubtless, among the gay and the profligate who presented themselves at Fox's levees, there were others as well as Fox, whose society was calculated to produce a pernicious effect upon the Prince's morals and politics. At Brooks's, as the King appears to have been well aware, it was the custom of the Prince's friends to speak of their Sovereign with ribald irreverence; to ridicule his personal peculiarities, and even to lay wagers on the probable duration of his life. Possibly the Prince may rarely, if ever, have been present on these occasions; yet as his friends would scarcely have indulged in such indecencies had they supposed them to be unpalatable to him, the inference the King was likely to draw from such proceedings must have been a distressing one indeed.

The King, at this period, was not only enthralled by a political party which he cordially disliked, but, if public

* Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 245.

† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. pp. 598–9.

belief had any foundation in truth, his state of slavery was complete. Men spoke of the new Administration as the "Regency," and of the new Ministers as the "Regents." A caricature of the day—entitled "The Captive Prince or Liberty run Mad"—represents Shelburne, Richmond, Keppel, and Fox fixing fetters on the King's feet and ancles, while the last three are severally made to exclaim, —"I command the Ordnance"—"I command the Fleet" —"I command the Mob." In the mean time, the world, according to Walpole, looked on and smiled at the phenomenon of half-a-dozen great lords claiming "an hereditary and exclusive right" to retain the Government in their families, "like the Hebrew priesthood in one tribe." *

Considering the King's aversion to his Whig Ministers, he seems to have thrown much fewer difficulties in their way—if, in fact, he threw any at all—as well as to have shown them a great deal more consideration, than they probably had expected. For instance, instead of his insisting, as the new Cabinet had anticipated, on his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, being placed at the head of the army, Lord Rockingham no sooner proposed General Conway to him for the post of Commander in Chief, than, we are told, the Marquis's suit was conceded "as easily as his other terms."† The King, indeed, would seem to have grown almost in favour with his keepers. As instances, we may mention Lord Shelburne intimating to the Lord Chancellor how "amazed" he is at the amount of genius which he has discovered in his royal master; in the House of Commons, we find Burke, with tears in his eyes,‡ descanting on a message from the throne as "the best of messages from the best of Kings;" and lastly, on the same occasion, we find Fox dwelling on the "unparalleled grace"

* Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 249.
† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 531.
‡ Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 47.

with which the Sovereign had come forward to alleviate the sufferings of his people.* Nor was it in the House of Commons alone, that Fox began to speak in an altered tone of the Prince whom he had so often and so bitterly attacked. On the 12th of April he writes to General Fitzpatrick—"The King appears more and more good-humoured every day, and I believe is really pleased with the full levees and drawing-rooms which he sees every day." Again Fox writes on the 15th—"All this time, the King seems in perfect goodhumour, and does not seem to make any of those difficulties which others make for him."† In fact, to the last day of the existence of the Rockingham Administration we find its leaders, little as they loved their royal master, doing ample justice to his good intentions and good faith. "He felt it incumbent upon him," said the Duke of Richmond in the House of Lords, on the 10th of July, "to declare that his Majesty had performed with a religious scrupulosity all that he had promised."‡ Still stronger, on the same occasion, was the language of Lord Shelburne. "The noble Duke," he said, "had done justice to the character of the common master whom they both served. His Majesty had not only performed all that he had promised, but he had done a great deal more than he had promised, when it was in his power to have evaded the performance of that which he had promised. And this he would say with truth—that a Prince more disposed to comply with the wishes of his people he believed never sat on the British throne."§

A graceful concession, on the part of the King, to his new Ministers, was his reserving for their disposal four Garters which had lapsed to the Crown previously to the resignation of Lord North. One of them, indeed, he claimed

* Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. iii. pp. 4—5.
† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. pp. 314, 316.
‡ Parl. Hist., vol. xxiii. cols. 189—90. § *Ibid.*, col. 194.

for his third son, Prince William Henry, afterwards William the Fourth, but the three others, though he was anxious to set apart two of them for the Earls of Dartmouth and Ashburnham,* he allowed the Dukes of Richmond and Devonshire, and Lord Shelburne, to appropriate to themselves. The young Prince of Wales, who was present at the Investiture of the new Knights, is said to have described with much humour the different manner in which each received the honour at the hands of his Sovereign. The Duke of Devonshire, said the Prince, advanced to the throne as awkwardly as a clown; Lord Shelburne approached it fawning and bowing on each side of him like a courtier; the Duke of Richmond alone, said the Prince, bore himself with the unembarrassed air of a gentleman.†

The new Ministers had been but a short time installed in power, before the dislikes and differences which existed amongst them began to be more and more apparent, and more and more prejudicial to the service of the Crown. Lords Rockingham and Shelburne, it is true, had exchanged outward civilities; but, nevertheless, their repugnance to each other had neither diminished, nor had their personal intercourse become less formal and cold. Their written correspondence at this time runs—"Lord Rockingham presents his compliments to Lord Shelburne," &c.—and "Lord Shelburne presents his compliments to Lord Rockingham," &c.‡ Discord, indeed, pervaded all ranks of the Government. Burke and Fox detested Shelburne; Shelburne detested Burke,§ and was jealous of Fox. So early as the 12th of April, scarcely three weeks after the Rockingham Ministry had kissed hands, we find Fox lamenting to General Fitzpatrick the want of unanimity which existed

* Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. pp. 526—7.
† Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 71.
‡ Rockingham Corresp., vol. ii. pp. 463—4.
§ Nicholls's Recollections, p. 40.

among his colleagues. "We had a Cabinet this morning," he writes, "in which, in my opinion, there were more symptoms of what we had always apprehended than had ever hitherto appeared."* Again Fox writes to Fitzpatrick on the 28th—"Shelburne shows himself more and more every day; is ridiculously jealous of my encroaching on his Department, and wishes very much to encroach upon mine. He hardly liked my having a letter from Grattan, or my having written one to Lord Charlemont. He affects the Minister more and more every day, and is, I believe, perfectly confident that the King intends to make him so. Provided we can stay in long enough to have given a good stout blow to the influence of the Crown, I do not think it much signifies how soon we go out after."† Walpole draws a similar picture of Shelburne's jealousies and artifices; accusing him of seizing every opportunity of ingratiating himself with the King, and obstructing the views of Lord Rockingham and Fox.‡ Neither did the abstract facts of dislike on the part of the King, and of want of unanimity among themselves, constitute the only difficulties against which the new Ministers had to contend. A chilling lukewarmness on the part of individuals who ought to have been their warmest supporters, is bitterly complained of by Fox in his correspondence. On the 11th of May, in allusion to a motion which Government had carried only by a majority of three, he writes—"The Attorney and Solicitor General were both against me, and I had the mortification to depend for support upon the Lord Advocate, Jenkinson, and Mansfield;" and in the same letter he adds—"I have given you but a small part of the cause of my ill-humour when I have confined myself to the House of Commons. The House of Lords has been the most shameful scene you

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 314.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 316.
‡ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 543.

can imagine. The Duke of Richmond, in points where he was clearly right, has been deserted by every Minister present, more than once. Lord Rockingham and Keppel were absent."* Another source of discord in the Rockingham Cabinet was the antagonism of the Lord Chancellor Thurlow, who not only cordially disliked his colleagues, and delighted in thwarting their measures, but on one occasion went so far as to divide the House of Lords against them.† "It was said of him," writes Bishop Watson, "that in the Cabinet he opposed every thing, proposed nothing, and was ready to support every thing."‡ Nevertheless, we find the great personages in the Cabinet, disunited as they were, indulging in their jokes. "It must have been very provoking to you," observed Lord Shelburne to Fox, "to see Lord Camden and the Duke of Grafton come down with their *lounging opinions* to outvote you in the Cabinet;" and on another occasion we find Lord Shelburne whispering to Fox—"That *innocent man*, General Conway, never perceives when he has the casting vote in the Cabinet." §

Unfortunately, the dissensions among Ministers were not only fraught with detriment to their own interests, but to those of the community at large. When in Opposition, they had not only inveighed long and loudly against the defective state of the representative system in Parliament—against bribery and corruption, and against the undue influence of the Crown—but we have seen at least one of them, the Duke of Richmond, proceeding to the length of advocating so democratic a measure as universal suffrage. Now then that the Government of the country was in their hands, it

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. pp. 323—4.

† Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. v. pp. 543—5.

‡ Bishop Watson's Anecdotes of his Life, vol. i. p. 359.

§ These trifling incidents were repeated by Fox to his nephew Lord Holland as instances of the felicity of words with which Lord Shelburne, whose language was usually inaccurate, could occasionally express himself. *Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox*, vol. i. p. 454.

might have been expected that they would have taken steps for sweeping away those infamous rotten boroughs, against which they had so frequently protested, and to the corrupt existence of which the mass of political depravity which they mourned over, was mainly attributable. But, unhappily, the attainment of political power too often affects, if not the opinions, at least the policy, of the best-intentioned statesmen. Lord Rockingham, it would seem, was suddenly seized with fears for the Constitution; Lord John Cavendish was "diffident of the effect of *any* Parliamentary Reform"; Burke considered that it was fraught with ruin to the country. Even the Duke of Richmond seems to have been not unwilling to abandon his favourite measure if he could do so without detriment to his character for consistency. "I do not wish," he writes to Lord Rockingham, "to tie you down to my plan, or to any particular measure. I only ask to have the Committee. I trust to them for the measure, and only contend for *some plan* being adopted. My credit, as well as my opinion, binds me to require this." And he adds—"I am very sure that a Committee, doing but little, will satisfy."*

The result of this lukewarmness may be readily understood. When, on the 7th of May, *not* the Ministry, but William Pitt, introduced into Parliament his celebrated motion for enquiring into the representative system, Fox and Sheridan were the only members of the Administration, of any consideration, who gave it their hearty support. "Friend," writes General Burgoyne to Fitzpatrick, "was against friend among us."† Fox spoke admirably on the occasion, and Sheridan with a brilliancy for which the House of Commons as yet had scarcely given him the credit. "I think," writes Burgoyne, "I never heard more wit than part of his speech against the [Lord]

* Rockingham Papers, vol. ii. pp. 481—3.
† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 321.

Advocate." * Burke, on the other hand, not only withheld his support from his friends, but opposed the motion with all the vehemence of his excitable nature. "On Friday last," writes Sheridan to Fitzpatrick on the 20th of May, "Burke acquitted himself with the most magnanimous indiscretion; attacked W. Pitt in a scream of passion, and swore Parliament was, and always had been, precisely what it ought to be, and that all people who thought of reforming it wanted to overturn the Constitution."† Pitt's motion was negatived by a majority of twenty; the numbers being 161 to 141. The Reformers, as Lord Macaulay has observed, never again had so good a Division till they carried their great measure in 1832.‡

In the midst of the dissensions and jealousies which distracted the Cabinet, Lord Rockingham, after a tenure of the Premiership of only fifteen weeks' duration, breathed his last. The event took place on the 1st of July 1782, in the fifty-third year of his age. Of course, much eagerness was shown to ascertain on whom the vacant Premiership was likely to fall. Undoubtedly Fox, on account of his relationship to the great Whig Families, his transcendant abilities, and the industry with which he had applied himself to business while in office, might, without vanity, regard himself as not ill qualified for the post. He had resisted of late the great temptation of his life, the play-table; he had seldom looked into Brooks's, and had never once dined there since the King had placed the Secretary's Seals in his hands.§ "Fox," writes Walpole to Mann on the 5th of May, "shines as greatly in place as he did in Opposition, though infinitely more difficult a task. He is now as indefatigable as he was idle. He has perfect temper,

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 322. † *Ibid.*

‡ Memoir of Pitt, Biographies, p. 156.

§ Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 320, note by Lord Holland, and p. 326.

and not only good-humour but good-nature, and, which is the first quality of a Prime Minister in a free country, has more common sense than any man; with amazing parts, that are neither ostentatious nor affected."* And again, Walpole writes to Lady Ossory on the 7th of July—"I have no hesitation in saying, I think Mr. Fox the fittest man in England for Prime Minister. I say it aloud and every where." †

Next to Fox, the person who, from his high rank, from the integrity of his private life, and by his Parliamentary abilities, had a right to aspire to the Premiership, was the Duke of Richmond. But there were circumstances, as Fox and the Duke themselves must have severally well known, which militated against the vacant post being conferred either on one or the other. The Duke, for instance, was untractable and unpopular. At this time, he both disliked, and was disliked by the King. Lastly he was much too deeply pledged to carry out Parliamentary, and other reforms, not to render him almost as much an object of misgiving to the conservative section of the Whig party, as to the Tories. Still greater were the disadvantages under which Fox laboured. The democratic principles which he professed in common with the Duke—the dissoluteness of his private life—the fixed aversion with which he was regarded by the King—and, lastly, the opposition, which he was certain to encounter from the Shelburne section of the Cabinet, presented effectual bars to his being raised to the Premiership, and thus deprived his country of the benefit which it might have otherwise derived from his transcendant abilities.

Of the old "Newcastle" or "Rockingham" party, which, in former days, had so often and so arrogantly dictated terms to the Sovereign, but which, for some time past, had become greatly reduced in number and influence, there

* Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p 217. † *Ibid.*, vol. viii. p. 245.

were now in the Cabinet the Duke of Richmond, Lord John Cavendish, Fox, and Admiral, now Lord Keppel. But the party, though weakened, had foregone none of its ancient pretensions, and accordingly it was determined by Fox and his friends to resort to the presumptuous measure of dictating to the King a Minister of their own choosing. Their choice fell upon a convenient cipher, William Henry third Duke of Portland, a nobleman whose ducal rank, Parliamentary influence, and irreproachable private character, formed his principal, if not only, claims to the distinction. In proposing this arrangement, the principal difficulty which they anticipated was from the great probability of the Duke of Richmond taking umbrage at the preference being given to another; a difficulty which his favourite nephew, Fox, undertook to do his best to remove by explaining to him, as delicately and persuasively as possible, the views and motives of their common friends. Years afterwards, we find Fox speaking of the singularly embarrassing character of the mission. "We must settle without delay," he wrote to the Duke, "whom to propose as the successor of Lord Rockingham; and *as you and I are both out of the question*, owing to the decided part we have taken about Parliamentary Reform, I think the Duke of Portland should be the man." * The Duke's good sense, and knowledge of human nature, apparently kept him from manifesting any open displeasure at the time, yet the extent to which he was hurt and offended, was subsequently proved by the altered part which he took in politics. There can be little doubt, indeed, that when, two years afterwards, Pitt—instead of following his cousin, Earl Temple, into retirement—was prevailed upon to remain at the head of Government to the exclusion of Fox and his friends from power, it was principally owing to the advice and influence of the Duke

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. pp. 445—6.

of Richmond. "There is no man living," was the remark of the King on that occasion, "by whom I have been so much offended as by the Duke of Richmond, and no man to whom I am so much indebted." *

In the mean time, the King, in the due and proper exercise of his prerogative, had written to Lord Shelburne and offered him the Premiership, a step which was not only very far from being palatable to the members of the Rockingham party, but which, in the breast of Fox, kindled an extraordinary amount of indignation. From the hour, he insisted, that Lord Shelburne had come into power he had been guilty of gross and systematic duplicity. He had intrigued against his own colleagues. He had endeavoured to prejudice the King against them. Under these circumstances, added Fox, he had made up his mind, that, in the event of Lord Shelburne closing with the King's offers, no consideration should induce him to serve under the leadership of such a man. It was to no purpose that Fox's personal friends, alarmed at his threats of resignation, endeavoured to divert him from his purpose. It was to no purpose that they pointed out to him the grievous injury which he was about to inflict, not only on his party, but upon his country. It was in vain that the Duke of Richmond and General Conway reminded him that the disruption of the pending treaty of Peace, and consequently the renewal of hostilities with America, might prove the results of his retirement, and therefore implored him to continue at his post, at least till the completion of the treaty. Equally in vain also it was that Lord Shelburne offered him as large a share of power and patronage as, in the opinion of his relative, Lord Keppel, he had a fair right to claim.† Fox himself admitted to Walpole that his resignation might occasion "a great

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 455.

† Journal of the Duke of Grafton, quoted in Earl Stanhope's History of England, vol. vii. p. 270.

deal of mischief,"* yet he persisted in clinging to his original resolution. "I did not think," he writes to General Fitzpatrick on the 4th of July, "it had been in the power of politics to make me so miserable as this cursed anxiety and suspense does."†

On Wednesday the 3rd, the day previous to these words having been written, Fox, in a private audience in the royal closet, proceeded to the unwarrantable length of personally pressing upon the King the expediency of his placing one of the friends of the late Lord Rockingham at the head of the Treasury. Under no circumstances, probably, would George the Third have felt much inclined to follow Fox's advice, but, on the present occasion, having both sense and justice on his side, he had little reason for hesitation. Not only had the King selected the Minister whom he conscientiously believed to be the best qualified to carry on the Government with advantage to his crown and to his people, but, as regarded the relative merits of Fox's nominee, the Duke of Portland, and Lord Shelburne, there could be little question to which of the two statesmen the meed of superiority belonged. The Duke, as we have seen, was wanting in administrative ability, eloquence, and energy; qualities which the King not only found ready at hand in the person of Shelburne, but the latter nobleman was, moreover, possessed of great political courage, a virtue which was ever highly valued by George the Third. It was a frequent saying of Jeremy Bentham that Lord Shelburne was the only statesman he ever heard of, who did not fear the people.‡

It was on the following day, Thursday, at St. James's, that previously to the Sovereign making his appearance in the levee-chamber, Lord Shelburne and Fox were to be seen July 4.

* Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 252.

† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 461.

‡ Lord Holland's Memoirs of the Whig Party, vol. i. p. 41, *note*.

standing apart from the rest of the company, evidently engaged in warm, if not angry, conversation. Fox, it seems, had bluntly put the question to Shelburne whether he had definitively accepted the post of First Lord of the Treasury, and having been answered in the affirmative, plainly intimated to him his intention of quitting the Government. Accordingly, so soon as he entered the royal closet after the levee, he produced the seals of office, which the King, after paying him the compliment of desiring him to take further time for consideration, was—not very reluctantly perhaps—induced to accept.*

This very day, Fox returned to his former evil courses, and to the society of his former evil companions. For instance, after having entertained the Prince of Wales at dinner†—on which occasion the bottle is said to have circulated freely enough—he proceeded to Brooks's where he stayed till four o'clock in the morning, and then, dropping into White's, where he found Lord Weymouth—one of the most jovial of boon companions, and one of the hardest drinkers of the day—he sat up with him till a far later hour.‡ It was in allusion to Fox's return to the clubs and the Faro table, that Hare congratulated his friend on having quitted the service of the King of England to resume his allegiance to the King of Egypt. §

* Journal and Correspondence of William Lord Auckland, vol. i. p. 2; Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 248; Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 437.

† "The Prince," writes Fitzpatrick, "expressed much kindness towards him, assuring him that he should ever consider Lord Rockingham's friends as the persons the most to be depended upon, and as the best friends of the country." *Memorials of Fox*, vol. i. p. 437.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 245. The "midnight excesses" of Lord Weymouth, and his partiality for the "bewitching smiles of Burgundy," have been immortalised by Junius: vol. i. p. 10. Ed. 1794. "Lord Weymouth," writes Wraxall, "was a man of very eminent talents, though accompanied with great singularities of character; highly convivial, whose conversation entertained and delighted; but, in order to profit by his society, it was necessary to follow him to White's, to sit down to supper, to drink deep of claret, and to remain at table till a very late hour of the night, or rather of the morning." *Hist. Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 73.

§ Auckland Correspondence, vol. i. p. 15.

"The resignation of Mr. Fox," writes his nephew, Lord Holland, "is unquestionably one of the two passages of his public life most open to animadversion, and most requiring explanation."* That Fox, on this occasion, was influenced as much by personal as by patriotic motives, appears to have been a common opinion at the time; nor, with the ampler means which posterity enjoys of weighing the merits of the case, does it seem easy to pronounce a different verdict. Such, at all events, was the conviction left on the mind of his colleague, General Conway, and such was also the opinion which Pitt, who had hitherto had no reason to be prejudiced against Fox, expressed in private as well as in public. † Nevertheless Fox's conduct has not only been warmly defended by his friends and admirers, but it would be uncharitable not to admit that he may have acted according to the convictions of his conscience. "I have done right; I am sure I have;" he writes to Mr. Thomas Grenville. "The Duke of Richmond thinks very much otherwise, and will do wrong. I cannot help it. I am sure my staying would have been a means of deceiving the public and betraying my party, and these things are not to be done for the sake of any supposed temporary good. I feel that my situation in the country, my power, my popularity, my consequence, nay, my character, are all risked; but I have done right, and therefore in the end it must turn out to have been wise. If this fail me, the pillared firmament is rottenness, and the earth's base built on stubble." ‡

But, although Fox may not have been guilty of a crime,

* Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 472.

† Horace Walpole writes to the Earl of Harcourt on the 5th of July;—"Mr. Pitt has returned his briefs to his clients, and within this hour the first battle will be fought in the House of Commons between him and Mr. Fox; the former declaring loudly against the factious resignation of the latter. This is Mr. Pitt's language not mine." *Walpole's Letters*, vol. viii. p. 244.

‡ Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George the Third; by the Duke of Buckingham, vol, i. p. 55. For the sake of brevity, this work will in future be referred to in the notes of these pages as the Buckingham Papers.

there seems little doubt that he had committed an irreparable blunder. "From all whom I have seen," writes Lord Temple to his brother, Thomas Grenville, "my opinion is that Fox has undone himself with the public, and his most intimate friends seem of the same opinion." * That, at all events, he committed the double error of exaggerating his own importance and of miscalculating the credit of the party to which he belonged, appears to be indisputable. By some unaccountable perversion of reasoning, he had persuaded himself that the nation called for the Duke of Portland; whereas, to adopt a sarcastic remark of Walpole, till the Duke had been nominated Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, there were perhaps not one hundred men in England who were conscious of his existence. "I repeated my apprehensions" [to Fox], writes Lord Temple, "that the people would not stand by him in his attempt to quit upon private grounds, which from their nature would appear to be a quarrel for offices, and not a public measure." † But notwithstanding this, and doubtless much similar sensible advice from the many friends who loved him, Fox evidently clung to the false and fatal conviction, not only that his conduct in quitting the Government would procure him the applause of the public, but that public opinion, combined with family interest and the magic of his name, would ere long reconduct him to patronage and power. Equally mistaken was he in his estimate as to the effect which his resignation was likely to produce upon the conduct of his personal friends. He had evidently flattered himself that the greater number of his colleagues—especially his relatives, the Duke of Richmond and Lord Keppel—would have followed him into private life, whereas the only members of the Administration who paid him that compliment, were the Duke of Portland, Lord John Cavendish,

* Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 52. † *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 51.

Burke, and Sheridan. Another error committed by Fox was his parting with the powerful countenance and friendship of the Duke of Richmond. So far, in fact, was the Duke from approving of his conduct, that we find him, not only "outrageous at the idea of resignation",* but "indefatigable" in his endeavours to prevent other members of the Rockingham party following Fox's example.† Even Keppel, much as he loved Fox, was prevailed upon, by the superior influence of the Duke, to remain for a season at the head of the Board of Admiralty.‡

Between Fox and the Duke of Richmond this unfortunate state of affairs very nearly produced, not only a political rupture, but a personal quarrel. "Fox," writes Walpole, "being his Grace's nephew, the Duke was most offended with him. I was fortunately one of those evenings with the Duke, when Fox came to expostulate with him. I would have retired, but the Duke pressed me to stay. Fox was very urgent, the Duke very firm. I interposed, and told Fox, that though I was persuaded that no man in England was so fit to be Minister as himself, yet I could not but disapprove his, and his friends, disuniting the party, nor thought they had sufficient grounds for breaking with Lord Shelburne. I entreated both him and the Duke to argue without passion, and to remember that being such near relations, they must come together again, and therefore I hoped neither would say what the other could never forgive. I did prevent any warmth, and they parted civilly, though equally discontent with each other."§

* Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 52.

† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 437.

‡ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 550.

§ *Ibid.* Lord Temple writes, on the 4th of July, to his brother, Thomas Grenville; —"I have had a long conversation just now with the Duke of Richmond, who is unhappy, but determined to go on till the first breach on fair public grounds; and wherever or whenever he finds Lord Shelburne tripping, he has apprized him that he will quit, and the other has agreed to it, with every seeming profession of cordiality; and thus matters stand." *Buckingham Papers*, vol. i. p. 52. It appears by the Auckland

The point in Fox's conduct, which naturally weighed the heaviest against him in the opinion of his contemporaries, was the fact that, on all important political questions, there existed very little difference between Lord Shelburne's views and opinions and his own. Even admitting, then, that Lord Shelburne may have been guilty of all the duplicity and chicanery with which he was charged by Fox, surely it afforded no sufficient excuse for the precipitate manner in which the latter flung up the seals of office, to the great detriment of public business. In the words subsequently addressed by Lord Temple to the King, he "abandoned the Government in a situation, from various reasons, the most critical, and upon grounds which, upon every principle public and private, were apparently indefensible."* Moreover, admitting that he may have been actuated by purely conscientious motives, surely his subsequent conduct, when out of office, should have been very different from what it proved to be. Clearly, he should have acted the independent and dignified part of supporting his late colleagues so long as he approved of their measures, instead of allying himself, as he afterwards did, with men whom he had, over and over again, denounced as the enemies of their country, thus increasing the repugnance with which he was regarded by his sovereign, and forfeiting his character for political honesty in the minds of thousands of his fellow countrymen.

Correspondence, (vol. i. p. 14,) that Fox at this time spoke "in very harsh terms of the Duke of Richmond."

* Letter to the King, March 23, 1783 : *Buckingham Papers*, vol. i. p. 196.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The Shelburne Administration—Pitt Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Dundas Treasurer of the Navy—Fox's Explanation of his Conduct and Attack on his former Colleagues—Reply of Pitt—Lord Shelburne's Defence in the Upper House—Rodney vanquishes the French Fleet under De Grasse—Naval Tactics—"Breaking the Line"—Termination of the Siege of Gibraltar—Independence of America Acknowledged—Peace with France, Spain, and Holland—Ignorance of Englishmen on American Affairs—The King's Distress at the loss of the American Colonies—Weakness of the Government—Attempt to conciliate Fox—Rivalry of Fox and Pitt—Coalition of Fox with Lord North—Debates in Parliament—Ministers Defeated—Resignation of Lord Shelburne.

Lord Shelburne found but little difficulty in filling up the vacant places in the ranks of the Ministry. Lord Grantham and Mr. Thomas Townshend, afterwards Lord Sydney, succeeded Lord Shelburne and Fox as Secretaries of State; Earl Temple was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in the room of the Duke of Portland; Pitt, at the age of twenty-three, became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Lord Advocate, Henry Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville, Treasurer of the Navy. Thus commenced, between the two latter eminent men, that long political partnership and private friendship, which it was destined that death alone should terminate.

The business of the Parliamentary Session had now been nearly brought to a close. Only on one occasion—previously July 9
to the prorogation, did the House of Commons present a scene of any interest. On that occasion, every eye was fixed on Fox, as, divested of his court costume and wearing his old familiar uniform of blue and buff, he walked up the House of Commons and took his seat on the Opposition

benches. Though still only in the thirty-fourth year of his age, he retained but slight appearance of youth; nor was it easy to imagine that the slovenly-looking being who was preparing to address the House, had formerly affected the dress and manners of the Exquisites of the day. "At five and twenty," writes Wraxall, "I have seen him apparelled *en petit maitre* with a hat and feather, even in the House of Commons." * Fox's figure was broad, heavy, and inclined to corpulency. His features were harsh, swarthy, and saturnine, in some degree resembling those of King Charles the Second, of whom he was the great-great-grandson. The most striking features in his face were his black and shaggy eyebrows, which at times stamped it with an almost repulsive aspect.† Those, however, who enjoyed his friendship, or moved in the same social circle with him, were aware how different was the expression which his features were capable of wearing. When animated by conversation, or lighted up by a smile, they displayed, not only genius, but that perfect good humour and thorough benevolence, which constituted the irresistible charms of this extraordinary man.

Close to Fox sat his two late colleagues, Lord John Cavendish and Burke. Below him sat Lord North. Fox's defence of himself was not less able or eloquent than had been anticipated by his admirers. With great spirit and

* Historical Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 229. 3rd Edition.

† It is needless perhaps to observe that Fox's swarthiness of complexion forms part of the poignancy of the following happy quotation of George Selwyn's. "Selwyn," writes Mr. Eden to Lord Loughborough, "had a dispute last week about the word '*central*' against Lord Weymouth, who espoused '*centrical*.' The next day somebody came and told him that Charles Fox had decided against him. 'Then,' said Selwyn, 'carry him my compliments with the following authority from the Rape of the Lock :—

'Umbriel, a dusky, melancholy sprite,
As ever sullied the fair face of light,
Down to the *central* earth, his proper scene,
Repaired to search the gloomy cave of Spleen.'"

(*Canto 4.*)

—*Auckland Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 29.

force he denied that his abandonment of his party had been occasioned by either jealousy, rancour, or ambition. His conduct, he said, had met with the approval of the wise and the good. He had found himself in the midst of councils so distracted, and called upon to approve of measures so opposed to the public interests, that it would have been an act of treachery to his country had he consented to continue a member of the Cabinet. No man of character, he exclaimed, ought to remain in that Cabinet. Lord Shelburne he indirectly attacked in the severest language. He represented him as a man in whom duplicity was systematic; as one who respected neither promises, nor engagements, nor principles; as one who was capable of carrying out the most corrupt measures by the corruptest of all means. Fox's hearers, much as they admired his eloquence, seem scarcely to have been convinced by his arguments. By Pitt he was openly and boldly charged with having sacrificed the interests of his country either to his ambition, his interests, or his animosities. "If," said the young Chancellor of the Exchequer, "the right honourable gentleman so much disliked Lord Shelburne's political principles or opinions, why did he ever consent to act with that nobleman as a colleague? Or, if he had suspected the noble lord of countenancing measures adverse to the interests of the country, why; instead of petulantly throwing up his employment, had he not called a Cabinet Council, when the worth of his suspicions might readily have been ascertained."

The task of defending the Cabinet fell principally upon Conway, whose speech, but for his evident determination to avoid an irreparable rupture with Fox, would in all probability have been a more effective one. In the House of Lords the vindication of the Government was more satisfactory. There, in an able, sensible, and manly speech, Lord Shelburne not only denied the truth of the charges

which had been brought against him, but retorted by laying all the blame of the recent rupture in the Cabinet at the door of his late impracticable colleagues. On the subject of their attempting to dictate a Minister to the King, Lord Shelburne was especially severe. It was the principle, he declared, of his master in politics, the great Lord Chatham, that the country ought on no account to be governed by an oligarchical party or by family connexion. It was the custom, he said, among the Mahrattas, for a certain number of powerful lords to elect a Peishwa whom they vested with the apparent plenitude of power, while he was in fact but the creature of an aristocracy, and nothing more than a royal pageant. For himself, Lord Shelburne declared, "he would never consent that the King of England should be a King of the Mahrattas." On the 11th of July, Parliament was prorogued till the 5th of December.

The year 1782 was marked by many important events, both at home and abroad. Measures were passed in Parliament for preventing excisemen and Custom House officers from voting at elections, and Contractors sitting as Members of the House of Commons; a motion was carried in that House for erasing from its journals the disgraceful and arbitrary resolution which, thirteen years previously, had declared Wilkes to be incapacitated to sit as a representative of the people; and, lastly, Burke brought forward his celebrated bill for reforming the Civil List establishments, which notwithstanding the opposition which it met with from Lord Chancellor Thurlow in the House of Lords, he succeeded in carrying through Parliament.

As regarded affairs abroad, the year had commenced in the same gloom and despondency with which the previous one had closed. In the month of May, for instance, we find Lord Rockingham writing to the Duke of Portland—"We feel in the moment the most pressing want of seamen.

It is no secret that we have now ten ships of the line with scarce a man to put in them." * Brighter days, however, were about to dawn on the fortunes of England. In an interview, which, in the preceding month of December, had taken place between Sir George Rodney and the King, the latter, ever placing the fullest confidence in the skill and gallantry of the Navy, had prevailed upon Sir George to return at once to the West Indies, notwithstanding the insufficiency of the force which the Admiralty was for the present enabled to place under his orders. On quitting the royal closet, Rodney happened to encounter his friend, Sir Walter Farquhar, who heartily wished him success against the foe. "Many thanks to you, for your good wishes," replied Rodney, "and in return I promise to bring you back a present of De Grasse." If their flags should meet, he said on another occasion "one of us must be a prisoner." † On the 17th of January he succeeded in weathering Ushant. On the 19th of February he reached Barbadoes. "The fate of this empire," writes Lord Sandwich to him, "is in your hands, and I have no reason to wish that it should be in any other." ‡

On the 8th of April, the heart of Rodney was gladdened with the tidings that the French fleet, commanded by De Grasse, was loosing from its moorings and preparing to put to sea. It numbered thirty-three sail of the line; while the British fleet by this time consisted of thirty-five. Conspicuous amidst the former soared the masts of the famous and formidable "Ville de Paris," the magnificent present of the city of Paris to Louis the Fifteenth, and the largest ship that floated on the waters. For two days Rodney endeavoured to bring on an action with the enemy, but it was not till the 12th that he was successful. Needless perhaps

* Rockingham Corresp., vol. ii. p. 477.
† Mundy's Life of Rodney, vol. ii. pp. 169, *note*, 170, *note*.
‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 182.

it is to remark, that it was on this occasion that Rodney, for the first time, put in practice the memorable manœuvre, known by the phrase of "breaking the line." The sea was tranquil and the sky cloudless; thus justifying a subsequent remark made by Lord Loughborough in the House of Peers, that Rodney's victory combined all "the pomp, the pride, and circumstance of war." The signal for close fighting having been given, Rodney was the first to lead the way in the direction of the enemy's fleet. Sir Gilbert Blane, who breakfasted with him half an hour before the action, and who stood by his side during nearly the whole of that memorable day, has related how gallantly the Admiral bore down on the French ships in his flag ship, the "Formidable," and how triumphantly, after having received and returned the fire of one half their force, he broke "under one general blaze and peal of thunder," through the enemy's line. While the "Formidable" was sailing past the "Glorieux," French line of battle ship, which was lying almost a wreck upon the waters, but with her colours still attached to one of her fallen masts, Rodney calmly called the attention of Sir Gilbert Blane to the resemblance which she bore to a fallen hero as described by his favourite poet, Homer. "Now," he exclaimed, "will be the contest for the body of Patroclus!" Throughout the action, which lasted from sunrise to sunset, he never quitted the quarter-deck for a minute. The only refreshment which he indulged in was a lemon, which he constantly held in his hands, and frequently applied to his lips.* Fortunately he escaped without a wound or a contusion. To Lady Rodney he writes on the day after the battle—"Providence does it all, or else how should I escape the shot of thirty-three sail of the line, every one of which, I believe, attacked

* From information given by Lord Cranstown, who was on board the "Formidable." Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 113. Mundy's Life of Rodney, vol. ii. pp. 229—231.

me; but the 'Formidable' proved herself worthy of her name." *

Rodney's manœuvre was completely successful. From the moment that the "Formidable" broke through the enemy's line, victory may be said to have declared in favour of the British. One by one, the French ships lowered their colours, leaving, however, the French ensign still fluttering from the tall mast of the huge "Ville de Paris," the flag ship of De Grasse, till whose surrender it was felt that the triumph was incomplete. At length the proud flag was seen to descend; a sight which, in the words of Sir Gilbert Blane, sent through each British bosom a "thrill of ecstasy" which no language could adequately describe.†

De Grasse had done all that could have been expected from the most intrepid and patriotic commander. When Lord Cranstown, after the action, proceeded on board the "Ville de Paris" to receive his sword, he found her sides completely riddled with holes, and her rigging torn to pieces. She had neither a sail, nor a mast capable of carrying a sail. The scene of slaughter which Lord Cranstown witnessed was more terrible than he could have imagined.‡ Even the quarter-deck, on which the French Admiral was standing almost alone, was strewed with the wounded and the dead. The principal emotion which De Grasse displayed was *astonishment*—astonishment that, in so short a space of time, his fleet should have been defeated, at finding his magnificent ship a prize in the hands of the enemies of his country, and himself a prisoner. He remained, that night, on board his own ship, and on the following day

* Mundy's Life of Rodney, vol. ii. p. 255.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 235.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 236. For a curious and authentic account of the frightful scene of carnage, as well as of the mingled insolence, gaiety and levity displayed by the French officers of the "Ville de Paris," on Lord Cranstown being sent to take possession of her, see the *Memoirs and Corresp. of Sir Robert M. Keith, K.B.*, vol. ii. pp. 150—152.

became the honoured guest of Rodney. "It is odd;" writes the latter to Lady Rodney, "but within two little years I have taken two Spanish, one French, and one Dutch Admiral." * When the news reached Plymouth that the renowned "Ville de Paris" had become a British prize, some French officers, who were returning from thence to their own country by a cartel, laughed the rumour to scorn. "Impossible!" they said; "Not the whole British fleet could take the 'Ville de Paris.'" †

Such are the more interesting details connected with that memorable victory, which alike restored the tarnished honour of Great Britain, prevented Jamaica falling into the hands of France and Spain, humbled the pride of the House of Bourbon, and enabled the Court of St. James's to treat for peace with her powerful foes on honourable, instead of disgraceful terms.

In the mean time, the Rockingham Ministry, ignorant as yet of the glorious victory which Rodney had won, had thought proper to recall him to England. The order for him "to strike his Flag and come home" is dated the 1st of May, seventeen days before the tidings of his great success arrived to shame the obtuseness of Ministers, and to spread frantic delight throughout the metropolis. "In a very little time," writes one of his delighted daughters to him, "all London was in an uproar. The whole town was illuminated that night. We were at the play. When we went in, the whole house testified, by their claps and huzzas, the joy they felt at the news, and their love for you. Their acclamations lasted for, I am sure, five minutes. You may judge how happy we were." ‡

* Mundy's Life of Rodney vol. ii. p. 255. Since the Duke of Marlborough had brought Marshal Tallard a prisoner to England after the battle of Blenheim, no French naval or military Commander in Chief had been captured by the English.

† Letter from Plymouth, May 19, 1782: quoted in Earl Stanhope's History of England, vol. vii. p. 259.

‡ Mundy's Life of Rodney, vol. ii. p. 309.

To the King, whose personal kindness to him Rodney has repeatedly and gratefully acknowledged, as well as to Lord Sandwich, who, of late, at least, had appreciated and supported him, the success of the great Admiral must have been especially gratifying. The Rockingham Ministry, indeed, reaped the advantage of his great achievement, but it was to the late Administration, who had sent out the expedition, that the merit was unquestionably due. "The late Ministers," writes Walpole, "are robbed of a victory that ought to have been theirs; but the mob do not look into the almanac." *—"I would say to the present naval Alexander," said Lord North in the House of Commons—"True, you have conquered, but you have conquered with the arms of Philip."

The Whigs contented themselves with rewarding Rodney with the lowest step in the peerage, and a paltry pension of two thousand a year. It was less by twelve hundred a year than the pension which Lord Rockingham had recently procured for his friend Colonel Barré; † less by two thousand a year than Lord Shelburne had obtained for his friend, Dunning; less also by two thousand a year than Lord North had acquired at the close of his calamitous Administration. The rank, too, in the peerage conferred on Rodney was a grade lower than that to which Admiral Keppel had recently been raised, for services vastly inferior. "My own ancestor," said Lord Sandwich in the House of Lords, "was for his services made an Earl and Master of the Wardrobe for three lives. Surely what Sir George Rodney has done no less merits an Earldom, with an annuity of two or three thousand pounds to be annexed to it. The last action alone deserved so much."

* Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 222.

† Colonel Barré's pension was nominally 3000*l.* a year, but according to Earl Stanhope the amount of its gross receipts was 3,200*l.* Hist. of Eng., vol. vii. p. 245.

It was said of Rodney, in his day, as it has since been said of Nelson, that he was too much addicted to self-laudation; somewhat too prone to put himself forward as the hero of his own tale. For instance, it has been related of him, that after his memorable victory, he caused a chair to be placed on the quarter-deck of his flag ship, where, seated in the moonlight with his eyes turned towards the colossal bulk of his splendid prize the "Ville de Paris," he is said to have indulged in an extravagant panegyric on the services which he had rendered his country, mingled with invectives on the ingratitude of men in power. Some foundation there probably was for these charges against Rodney; yet who, that remembers the acts of the hero, and the many kindly and graceful qualities of the man, but will pardon him for a weakness which other great men have doubtless indulged in as freely, though they may not have exhibited it so incautiously. For ourselves, we should forgive him were it only for the affection which we find him bearing for his absent terrier, "Loup"—his "faithful friend" as Rodney styles him—and for the care which he took of the famous little bantam-cock, who not only shared his master's perils on the glorious 12th of April, but who, at each broadside which the "Formidable" poured into the "Ville de Paris," crowed and clapped his wings as if exulting in the promise of victory. "Loup," it seems, on Rodney's departure from home to take command of the fleet, had manifested how great was his grief by attaching himself to one of his master's coats, and refusing to take food for three days. "Remember me," writes Rodney to his wife on the 12th of February, "to my dear girl and to my faithful friend, Loup. I know you will kiss him for me."*

Scarcely less redounding to the honour of Great Britain,

* Mundy's Life of Rodney, vol. ii. pp. 28, 375.

or less important in its results, was the glorious termination, in the month of September, this year, of the protracted and memorable siege of Gibraltar. For more than three years its devoted garrison, exposed to every possible description of peril and privation, had offered a noble resistance to the united armaments of Charles the Third of Spain and of Louis the Sixteenth of France. During that time, the restoration of that grand and solitary rock to the crown of Spain, had been the nightly prayer of the Spanish monarch. "*Is it taken?*" was daily his waking and anxious enquiry. Every effort which power, wealth, valour, and ingenuity, could bring into play, had been exhausted to effect its reduction; yet, at the close of the long and eventful siege, the British flag continued to float, as it still floats, on one of the proudest and lordliest conquests in the world. The final attack took place on the 13th September, when a tremendous cannonade was opened upon the fortress from a vast fleet of floating batteries, mortar-vessels and gun-boats. It was answered, however, by an incessant and well-directed discharge of red-hot shot which, fortunately setting fire to the formidable floating batteries, occasioned so awful a havoc among them, that on the following morning, floating spars and shattered hulls were the only visible remains of the formidable armada of the preceding day. From that time, although the siege was nominally protracted, Gibraltar was safe from capture. The veteran and gallant governor, Sir George Eliott, was decorated with the order of the Bath upon the ramparts, and was subsequently raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Heathfield.

The American war may be said to have terminated with the resignation of Lord North. For some time longer, indeed, the British continued unmolested in the few strong positions over which their flag had floated at the interruption of hostilities, but all idea of conquest had been long since abandoned. Peace was ardently longed for on both

sides of the Atlantic, and accordingly, on the 30th of November, provisional articles were signed at Paris, in which Great Britain formally acknowledged the thirteen American Provinces to be free and independent States. The natural result of the concession of American Independence was peace between Great Britain and France and Spain, the preliminary articles of which were signed at Versailles on the 20th of January 1783; a cessation of hostilities having in the mean time been agreed to with Holland, which a few months afterwards terminated in a peace between the two countries. The terms which Great Britain obtained from her enemies were not only severely commented upon at the time, but in Parliament drew down many violent attacks upon Lord Shelburne and his colleagues. In our own day, however, it seems to be pretty generally conceded that those attacks were mainly attributable to political jealousies and party hatred; and, further, that the terms obtained by Great Britain were as favourable as she had either the right to expect or the power to exact. "There is not the slightest reason," writes Lord Macaulay, "to believe that Fox, if he had remained in office, would have hesitated one moment about concluding a peace on such conditions."*

Parliament, in the mean time, had been opened on the 5th December by a remarkable speech from the throne, in which the King formally announced the Independence of the American Provinces. "Did I lower my voice when I came to that part of my speech?"† was his enquiry of Lord Oxford, so soon as the embarrassing ceremony was at an end. Next to the welfare and happiness of his own people, which the King believed to be jeopardized by American Independence, he took to heart the disastrous consequences which he imagined the separation would entail on the Americans themselves. "In thus," runs the Speech

* Biographies, p. 158. † Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 577.

from the Throne, "admitting their separation from the crown of Great Britain, I have sacrificed every consideration of my own to the wishes and opinion of my people. I make it my humble and earnest prayer to Almighty God, that Great Britain may not feel the evils which might result from so great a dismemberment of the Empire; and that America may be free from those calamities, which have formerly proved in the mother-country how essential monarchy is to the enjoyment of constitutional liberty. Religion, language, interest, affections, may and, I hope, will, yet prove a bond of permanent union between the two countries. To this end, neither attention nor disposition on my part shall be wanting."

There is no part of the political conduct of George the Third which has entailed upon him severer censure than the persistency with which he approved of the war with America even to its "bitter end." It was a question, however, on which, as we have already seen, he was very far from standing alone in his views and sentiments. So long, in fact, as there had appeared a reasonable prospect of reducing America to obedience, and of drawing a revenue from her resources, the Americans had been regarded by a large majority of the people of Great Britain as rebels, and the war consequently had been a popular one. The fact is, that, up to a late period of the last century, the ignorance of the English, in all things pertaining to America, appears to have been lamentably great. When, only a few years previously to the passing of the Stamp Act, Lord Ligonier recommended the defence of Annapolis to the old Duke of Newcastle—"To be sure," is said to have been the Duke's reply—"Annapolis ought to be protected; of course Annapolis must be protected. By the bye, where is Annapolis?" Not less curious is it to find Colonel Barré assuring Josiah Quincy, the younger, that only fourteen or fifteen years had elapsed, since more than two-thirds of the people of Great Britain

were of the opinion that the Americans were negroes.* By degrees, however, they had arrived at a juster knowledge of the real strength of America, as well as of the folly and injustice of prolonging a contest, which had so recently met with their entire approval. "The American War," writes the historian Somerville, "is now condemned and execrated by those who lament its calamitous effects, without any retrospect to the motives, the feelings, and the justifiable grounds of entering into it, which produced almost an unanimity of national sentiment at the time of its commencement. Persons of my own age, who were wont, as I well remember, to express themselves with a passionate zeal on this subject, and who considered all those who held a different opinion the tools of faction and abettors of rebellion, have not only changed their sentiments, but seem to have forgotten them as much as if they had lost all sense of personal identity."†

"The war against the insurgent Colonies," writes the late Sir George Lewis, "had at first been highly popular."‡ Earl Russell also makes the same admission. "It cannot be denied," he says, "that, in his resistance to American claims, George the Third had the full concurrence of his people. The national pride revolted from any submission to demands loudly put forth, and accompanied with menaces of rebellion."§ Again, in 1775, we find Lord Rockingham admitting it to be his own conviction, as well as that of his friends, Lord John Cavendish, the Duke of Manchester, and Sir George Savile, "that the violent measures towards America are fairly adopted and countenanced by a majority of individuals of all ranks, professions, or occupations, in

* Gordon's Hist. of the American Revolution, vol. i. p. 438.
† The Rev. T. Somerville's Memoirs of his own Life and Times, p. 185.
‡ Essays on the Administrations of Great Britain, p. 28.
§ Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 301.

this country."* "The American War," said Lord North in the House of Commons, "has been suggested to have been the war of the Crown, contrary to the wishes of the People. I deny it. It was the war of Parliament. There was not a step taken in it that had not the sanction of Parliament. It was the war of the People, for it was undertaken for the express purpose of maintaining the just rights of Parliament, or, in other words, of the People of Great Britain over the Dependencies of the Empire. For this reason it was popular at its commencement and eagerly embraced by the people and Parliament. Could the influence of the Crown," enquired Lord North, "have procured such great majorities within the doors of the House of Commons as went almost to produce equanimity? Or, if the influence of the Crown could have produced those majorities within doors, could it have produced the almost unanimous approbation, bestowed without doors, which rendered the war the most popular of any that had been carried on for many years? Nor did it ever cease to be popular until a series of the most unparalleled disasters and calamities caused the People, wearied out with almost uninterrupted ill-success and misfortune, to call out as loudly for peace as they had formerly done for war."† May 6, 1778.

Moreover, to the very close of the American contest, not only the King, but other good and wise men, beheld in the impending separation of Great Britain from her Colonies the irremediable disgrace, and almost certain ruin of their country. Lord Chatham, for instance, may be said to have sacrificed his life to his endeavours to prevent the dismemberment of the Empire, and Lord Shelburne, one of the most clearsighted statesmen of his time, had anticipated the event with no less despondency. He would never, he said in the House of Lords in 1778, consent that Mar. 5.

* Letter to Edmund Burke, dated Sept. 24, 1775: *Burke's Corresp.*, vol. ii. p. 68.
† Parliamentary Debates, vol. xxiii. col. 849.

America should be independent. Should their independence, he exclaimed, be conceded to them, "the sun of Great Britain is set, and we shall no longer be a powerful or respectable people."* More than once he had repeated in Parliament that—he who should sign the Independence of America "would consummate the ruin of his country, and must be a traitor." Even so late as the summer of 1782, when, to use his own words, he had "waked from those dreams of dominion," we find him exclaiming in the
July 10. House of Lords that though the sun of England would set with the loss of America, he hoped to see it rise again, and was resolved to improve the twilight.†

It may be argued that the King, following the example of Lord Shelburne and others, ought to have perceived at an earlier period the improbability of Great Britain being able to hold her Colonies as a conquest, and consequently should long ago have abandoned the attempt. But excuses might be found for him which are inapplicable to other persons. He not only regarded Independence as pregnant with national dishonour and ruin, but it would be *his* reign, as he well knew, which would be pointed to as the epoch of the dismemberment of the British empire, and upon him personally was likely to be cast three-fourths of the opprobrium. If his policy had been wrong, it had at least been approved and upheld by the educated and learned in the land—by the Church, the Law, and the landed interest.
Feb. 12, 1775. "I am grieved to observe," writes Lord Camden to Lord Chatham, "that the landed interest is almost altogether
Dec. 16, 1776. anti-American." ‡—"The Court," writes Walpole, "had now at their devotion the three great bodies of the Clergy, Army, and Law."§ And again, Burke writes to Fox—"The

* Parl. Debates, vol. xix. col. 850.
† *Ibid.*, vol. xxiii. col. 194.
‡ Chatham Corresp., vol. iv. p. 401.
§ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 90.

Tories universally think their power and consequence involved in the success of this American business. The Clergy are astonishingly warm in it."* Moreover, let it be remembered that, throughout the contest with America, the King had apparently been kept lamentably ill-informed in regard to the real views and feelings of her people. He had not, like Lord Chatham, had a Franklin privately to advise with, and to enlighten him on the subject; nor, like Lord Rockingham, a Governor Wentworth; nor, like Lord Dartmouth, a Joseph Reed; nor, like Burke, his Massachusetts informants and friends. His means of intelligence were, almost necessarily, confined to such public despatches as his Ministers felt it their duty or their policy to lay before him; those despatches not only frequently containing the partial representations of irritated Governors and other dissatisfied Colonial placemen, but sometimes claiming the greater credit and consideration from their having been penned by native Americans themselves. Other excuses might be found for the King. Was it likely, it may be asked, that the most resolute monarch of his time should have consented to the partition of his dominions, and have surrendered up the brightest jewel in his diadem, without a struggle to the last? "Rather," said the Empress Catherine the Second of Russia, "than have granted America her Independence, as her brother-monarch, King George, had done, she would have fired a pistol at her head."† Lastly, of all men living, the generous Prince, who had been the foremost to encourage the American loyalists to repair to his standard, was the least likely to be first to abandon them to the hard fate which awaited them at the hands of their fellow-countrymen. Oct. 8, 1777.

The King's affliction at the loss of America is known to have been alike poignant and lasting. Fortunately, self-

* Burke's Works, vol. ii. p. 390. Ed. 1841.

† Lettres et Pensées de Maréchal Prince de Ligne, pp. 92—95; quoted in the Edinburgh Review, vol. xiv. p. 113.

reproach had no share in his distress. However unwise —however unfortunate may have been his policy—he had at least the satisfaction of reflecting that the motives which had influenced his conduct had been neither those of ambition, nor of a thirst for empire; but a firm conviction that he was doing no more than his duty in endeavouring to avert, by all lawful means in his power, a catastrophe which he believed to be alike pregnant with humiliation to his Crown and fatal to the interests of his Country. How many persons probably there are—by whom George the Third has been denounced as a tyrant, a simpleton, or a bigot—who, if they had been his contemporaries, instead of having had the advantage of judging of past events by the light of known results and modern experiences, would have been found sharers of the King's views, and supporters of his policy!

At the time when the English Parliament assembled before Christmas, Lord Shelburne's Administration had existed for five months. The number of his followers, in the House of Commons, was computed to amount to only one hundred and forty; those of Lord North to one hundred and twenty; those of Fox to ninety.* The rest of the House may be said to have consisted of independent members. Thus, it will be seen, Lord Shelburne's position could scarcely be much weaker than it was. He did his utmost, indeed, to ingratiate himself with the King,† but, against a majority in the House of Commons, the King was powerless. So early indeed, as the month of July, we find Lord Loughborough agreeing with William Eden that it was impossible the present Ministry could stand.‡ It was manifest, indeed, that unless two of the rival parties

* Letter from Gibbon to Lord Sheffield, Oct. 14, 1782: *Gibbon's Misc. Works*, p. 308.

† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. pp. 543, 568.

‡ Auckland Corresp., vol. i. pp. 5—7.

coalesced against the third, no administration that might be formed could last for many months.

In this state of affairs Lord Shelburne, it is said, would have willingly come to terms with Lord North, had not Pitt positively refused to sit in the same Cabinet with that nobleman. In the mean time, the Administration was almost daily affording evidence of increasing exhaustion. On the 23rd of January, the Duke of Richmond plainly 1783.
intimated to the King that so great was his dissatisfaction with Lord Shelburne he would attend no more Cabinet meetings.* On the following day, Lord Keppel resigned his post of First Lord of the Admiralty, and, a few days afterwards, Lord Carlisle threw up his appointment of Lord Steward of the Household. It was under these circumstances that, at the earnest instigation of Pitt, Lord Shelburne reluctantly consented to his opening a negotiation with Fox, to whose house accordingly the young Chancellor of the Exchequer repaired by appointment on the 11th of February. As might have been expected, he found Fox quite as much bent on proscribing Lord Shelburne, as he himself was resolved on not co-operating with Lord North. The abruptness, indeed, with which Fox denounced Lord Shelburne appears to have given considerable offence to Pitt. He had not come there, he said—drawing himself up—for the purpose of betraying Lord Shelburne, and he presumed therefore that any further discussion was unnecessary.† "From this period," writes Bishop Tomline, "may

* Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 578.

† This interview between Pitt and Fox, as well as another which took place between them in 1792, are pointed out by the late Sir George Lewis, (*Hist. Essays*, p. 106 *note*) as being additional to a third interview which took place between them in December 1790 at a consultation on the subject of Warren Hastings's impeachment, which interview, in the opinion of Lord Sidmouth, (*Pellew's Life of Sidmouth*, vol. i. p. 80,) was "the only occasion on which Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox were ever brought together in private life." There was, however, unquestionably a subsequent meeting between them, on the subject of peace with France, in June 1804. See *Diaries of the Right Hon. George Rose*, vol. ii. pp. 150, 152. This last work, at the time when Sir George Lewis wrote, had not been published.

be dated that political hostility which continued through the remainder of their lives." *

The same day, Pitt met his cousin, William Grenville, to whom he related the particulars of his interview with Fox. He had asked Fox, he said, but one question—whether there were any terms on which he would ally himself with the Ministry, to which the reply had been — "None, while Lord Shelburne remains." As Grenville shrewdly writes to his brother, Lord Temple — "The one must be very desperate, the other very confident, before such a question could be so put, and so answered." † The young statesman was in the right. Fox was already both confident and deep in those lamentable negotiations with his former antagonist, Lord North, which constituted the great error and misfortune of his public career. Only three days after his interview with Pitt, he and Lord North met at the residence of George North, afterwards third Earl of Guilford,‡ where they finally cemented that unnatural political alliance, which has ever since been emphatically distinguished as "The Coalition." §

Unnatural that alliance most unquestionably was. For years past, in the House of Commons, Fox had been in the habit of expressing himself hostile to almost every political principle advocated by Lord North, and of systematically opposing all his measures. Over and over again, in lan-

* Bishop Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 89 ; Buckingham Papers, vol. i. pp. 148—9 ; Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 33.

† Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 149.

‡ Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 37.

§ As early as the 14th of July 1782, Lord Loughborough, in a letter to William Eden, afterwards Lord Auckland, thus foreshows the practicability of the future and famous "Coalition." "My notion, in short, is, that part of the old [Lord North's] Administration, with the remnant of the Rockingham party, could form a stable Government. Their opposite faults would correct each other, and amongst them they would possess more character, and more of the public confidence, than any other assemblage of men. The first thing is to reconcile Lord North and Fox. The first, you know, is irreconcilable to no man ; the second will feel his ancient resentment totally absorbed in his more recent hostility, which I think he has no other means of gratifying." *Auckland Corresp.*, vol. i. p. 9.

guage too passionate and too eloquent not to have made indelible impressions on the Members of the House, he had charged Lord North and the late Ministry with corruption, incapacity, treachery, and falsehood. Over and over again, he had laid at their doors all the miseries and calamities which the American war had entailed on the country, and had even threatened them with an ignominious death on the public scaffold. He had denounced Lord North as "void of honesty and honour." He had opposed his being granted a pension on the plea that "men who have ruined their country were not entitled to the rewards of meritorious service." Should he ever make terms with any one member of the late Ministry, were his words in the House of Commons, he would "rest satisfied to be called the most infamous of mankind." He further denounced them as men, "who, in every public and private transaction, as Ministers, had shown themselves void of every principle of honour and honesty." In the hands of such men, he exclaimed, he would not trust his honour, even for a moment.*

As Walpole observes in one of his letters to Lady Ossory,† there is a trite old saying that "the dearest friends must part," but now a new axiom had been established that "the bitterest enemies may embrace." It has been said, indeed, that neither Lord North nor Fox had ever personally fostered any ill feeling towards each other, but, even if the fact could be proved, it would tend but little to palliate the exceptionable character of their new alliance. Not impossibly, each may have persuaded himself that, by acting as he did, his country would be a gainer, yet if the world attributed their conduct to other and less worthy motives, they had assuredly little reason to be surprised. Those motives, in the opinion of the majority of their fellow-

* Fox's Speeches, vol. ii. p. 39.
† Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 350.

countrymen, were assignable to ambition, to the desire for power and place, and to a personal and common repugnance to Lord Shelburne. Even the choice of means, by which they proposed to turn out the Administration—namely, opposition to the terms of the Treaty of Peace—was suggestive of egregious laxity of political principle. "That nothing," writes Lord Macaulay, "might be wanting to the scandal, the great orators who had, during seven years, thundered against the war, determined to join with the authors of that war in passing a vote of censure on the peace." *

On the 17th of February a majority of thirteen peers in the Upper House recorded their approbation of the Treaty of Peace, by voting an Address of thanks to the Crown. In the House of Commons the Address was violently opposed both by Fox and Lord North. Although, for many days past, vague rumours had gone abroad that the tribune of the people and the champion of high prerogative had mutually forgiven their personal animosities, and had made up their political differences, yet the House of Commons were scarcely prepared for those startling evidences of good-understanding and good-fellowship, which gradually developed themselves in the course of the night's debate. Fox, indeed, kept back from the knowledge of the House the fact of his having entered into formal political engagements with Lord North, yet, when taunted by Dundas and others on the subject of his altered language, he seemed to glory at finding himself fighting in the same ranks with his ancient enemy. The state of things, he said, which had occasioned their political enmity no longer existed. The American war, and with it the feuds and the rancour which it had engendered, were at an end. He was happy at all times to bury his animosities in

* Life of Pitt, *Biographies*, p. 160.

oblivion, but his friendships he hoped would never die. He had found the noble lord, he added, an honourable adversary, and he had no doubt of his openness and sincerity as a friend. Fox's speech was listened to by many with indignation if not contempt. "It was an age of great conspiracies;" said Powys, the member for Northamptonshire: "A *monstrous coalition* had taken place between a noble lord and an illustrious commoner: the lofty assertor of the prerogative had joined in alliance with the worshippers of the Majesty of the People." *

It was four o'clock in the morning when Pitt rose to speak. On the result of his eloquence may almost be said to have depended the fate of the Ministry. He was ill, however, and irritable, and consequently able to do justice neither to himself nor to his colleagues. In the opinion of his former tutor, Bishop Tomline, his speech on this occasion was one of the feeblest he ever delivered. He was even betrayed into resorting to personalities; taunting Sheridan, for instance, with his connexion with the stage, and advising him to reserve his dramatic turns and epigrammatic points for his theatrical audiences. The retort of Sheridan was admirable. "If ever," he said, "I again engage in those compositions to which the right honourable gentleman has in such flattering terms referred, I may be tempted to an act of presumption. I may be encouraged by his praises to try an improvement on one of Ben Jonson's best characters in the play of the Alchymist, — the Angry Boy." † When, at seven o'clock in the morning, a Division took place, Ministers found themselves defeated by a majority of sixteen; a majority which would doubtless have been still larger but for the offence

* Belsham's Memoirs of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 309—10; Parl. Hist., vol. xxiii. col. 487.

† Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 97; Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 585.

which the discovery of the intimacy between Fox and Lord North gave to many of the Members.* "Some of the staunchest friends of Fox and the Cavendishes," writes Walpole, "left them because they had joined Lord North, and some of Lord North's friends deserted him because he had united with Fox."† Wraxall also mentions the discomposure of Fox, when, on looking round him in the House of Commons, he ceased to behold on the Opposition benches the familiar faces of many of his friends.

On the 21st of February, the Opposition, through their mouth-piece, Lord John Cavendish, moved in direct and explicit terms a condemnation of the conditions of the Peace. A curious and exciting, as well as interesting, debate followed. Again, party spirit was carried to the most violent lengths; again, the fiercest invectives were levelled at the new and unholy alliance, of the existence of which there could no longer be well a doubt. For once in his life Lord North, as Walpole informs us, "betrayed the utmost anguish" at the taunts and reproaches to which he was exposed.‡ More especially he is said to have winced beneath a witty and withering sarcasm of Thomas Pitt, Member for Old Sarum. The noble Member in the Blue Riband, said his merciless assailant, had not only, by his persistence in the American war, inflicted the most cruel wounds upon his country, but now, by opposing the Peace, was doing his utmost to prevent a healing salve being applied to them. The case, he added, reminded him of that of a man at Bury who, on learning that a brother-in-law, whom he had caused to be assassinated, was in a fair way of recovering from his

* "There are great numbers of Members," writes Lord Bulkeley to Lord Temple, "who are outrageous at the junction of Fox with Lord North." Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 156.

† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 583.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 588.

wounds, had visited him in his sick chamber and torn away his bandages.*

His gifted cousin, William Pitt, delivered on this occasion a speech which lasted for two hours and three quarters. On its success or failure, as he himself must have been well aware, would depend, in all probability, his almost immediate elevation to the Premiership, or else a long postponement of the realization of the dreams of his early ambition. To all appearance the chances of success were greatly against him. In addition to labouring under the disadvantages of youth, of indifferent health, and insufficient experience in public affairs, he had to contend, not only against the eloquence of such Parliamentary giants as Burke, Sheridan, and North, but against one who would have been a giant in any age and in any country, Charles Fox. That Pitt fully appreciated and freely admitted the formidable powers of his destined rival, ample evidence exists to prove. When, a few months afterwards, on the first and last occasion of his crossing the British Channel, the Abbé de Lageard put the question to him how a nation so moral as the British could submit to be governed by a statesman whose irregularities in private life were so notorious as those of Fox, Pitt's reply was at once generous, comprehensive, and graceful. "You have never," he said, "been under the wand of the Magician."† At another time Pitt made the remark that whenever he thought he had spoken better than usual he found that "Fox surpassed himself in his reply."‡ That, under these circumstances, Pitt, before replying to Fox, should have been anxious to catch every argument, nay every word, that fell from the lips of Fox, was only natural. But he was still ill; so ill that, dreading the sudden consequences of a disordered stomach,

* Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 588.
† Life of Wilberforce, vol. i. p. 38.
‡ Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. iii. p. 248.

he was to be seen, while Fox was speaking, with his hand upon the handle of a door which opened into a portico behind the old House of Commons.* Indisposed, however, as he was, he not only spoke admirably, but his speech on this occasion has been pronounced by his admirers as one of the very finest he ever delivered. Rising immediately after Fox had sat down, he inveighed against his "unnatural coalition" with Lord North, in language of lofty indignation. "The triumphs of Party," he said, "with which this self-appointed Minister seems so highly elate, shall never seduce *me* to any inconsistency which the busiest suspicion shall presume to glance at. *I* will never engage in political enmities without a public cause. *I* will never forego such enmities without the public approbation; nor will *I* be questioned and cast off in the face of this House by one virtuous and dissatisfied friend."—"If," he added, "this baneful alliance is not already formed; if this ill-omened marriage is not already solemnized, I know a just and lawful impediment, and in the name of the public safety I here forbid the Banns." †

But it was upon Lord North that the weight of Pitt's eloquent indignation principally fell. Whatever, he said, might appear dishonourable or inadequate in the proposed articles of Peace was chargeable to the Noble Lord in the Blue Riband, whose profuse expenditure of the public money, whose temerity and obstinacy in protracting a notoriously pernicious and oppressive war, and whose utter unfitness to fill the high station which he had recently quitted, rendered a peace of any description absolutely necessary for the preservation of the State. After a touching allusion to the exalted political precepts which he had imbibed from his illustrious father, he spoke with cheerfulness of his own

* Life of Wilberforce, vol. i. p. 26.

† Parl. Hist., vol. xxiii. cols. 543, 552; Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. pp. 99, 100.

approaching retirement into private life, concluding his memorable oration with the fine lines of Horace—

"Fortuna sævo læta negotio, et
Ludum insolentem ludere pertinax,
Transmutat incertos honores,
Nunc mihi, nunc alii benigna.
Laudo manentem. Si celeres quatit
Pennas, resigno quæ dedit," &c.

On coming to the words, "*Et meâ virtute me involvo*"—which he omitted—he pointedly and modestly paused for a moment or two, and then, emphatically striking the table with his hand—added—

"—— probamque
Pauperiem sine dote quæro." *Horat. Lib.* 3, *Carm.* 29.*

But, splendid as was the triumph achieved by the young statesman, his efforts proved powerless against the united strength of Fox and Lord North. When, at three o'clock in the morning, the House came to a division, Ministers again found themselves in a minority; the numbers being two hundred and seven to one hundred and ninety.

This remarkable debate took place on Friday, the 21st of February, and on Monday the 24th Lord Shelburne resigned the premiership. At two o'clock on that day General Cuninghame writes to Lord Temple—"Lord Shelburne is now in the closet resigning, and most of his colleagues in the outward room to follow his example. The Chancellor's resignation is doubtful."† Thus did a House of Commons, which has been commonly represented as unusually corrupt, and as unduly influenced by the Court, overthrow two several Administrations in the course of a single year!‡

* Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. pp. 100, 101; Parl. Hist., vol. xxiii. col. 555.

† Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 166.

‡ "Twice in one twelvemonth," writes Walpole, "the same House of Commons overturned two Administrations—a strong argument against touching the mode of Representation. Did it want correction, if a Parliament chosen by the Court, and reckoned most corrupt and abandoned, tore two Ministers from the King in one year?" *Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 586.

CHAPTER XL.

Fox and his friends agree to recommend the Duke of Portland to the King as Premier—William Pitt pressed to accept the Premiership, but declines—The office offered to Lord North, but declined by him—The Prince of Wales allies himself with Fox and his party—Distress of the King at having the Whigs forced upon him, and at the misconduct of the Prince of Wales—The King urges Pitt to accept the Premiership—Pitt, after consulting with his friends, again declines—Critical state of public business—The King blames the Coalition, and the Coalition blames the King—Public opinion in favour of the King—After another attempt to engage Lord North, the King is compelled to call in the Duke of Portland, who becomes Premier—The Coalition Ministry—Burke and Sheridan not in the Cabinet—Pitt's motion for Parliamentary Reform defeated—Political Caricatures by Sayer and Gillray—Mutual bearing of the King and his new Ministers, particularly Fox, in their intercourse on public business.

Fox and Lord North now looked upon their triumph as complete. So satisfied, indeed, were they that the defeat of Lord Shelburne would occasion their own immediate return to office, that they commenced making their Ministerial arrangements even while that nobleman was still in power. Severally waiving their individual pretensions to the premiership, they agreed to dictate to the King a Minister who would be satisfied with the high honour of being the first servant of the Crown, though enjoying only the semblance of power. Their choice fell upon the third Duke of Portland, a nobleman of whose moderate claims to hold high office we have already had occasion to speak, and whose only apprenticeship in State business consisted in his having been Lord Chamberlain in Lord Rockingham's first Administration, and recently, for five months, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

The Duke proved to be as docile and passive an auxiliary as Fox and his friends could possibly have desired. No less convinced than Fox and Lord North of the immediate elevation of their party to power, we find him, so early as the 22nd of February—two days previously to Lord Shelburne's resignation—having the assurance to write to Earl Temple urging him, in a "most secret and confidential" letter to transfer his services as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to the embryo Administration of which the Duke had evidently made up his mind to be the chief.* The son of George Grenville, however, not only unhesitatingly declined the offer, but subsequently took upon himself the responsibility of addressing a letter to his Sovereign, in which he severely reprobated the conduct of Fox and his adherents. "It is my earnest prayer," he writes, "that your Majesty's wisdom and firmness may save the kingdom from the calamities which must be the consequences of this unprincipled coalition—unprincipled, because they can be bound to no political or moral principles in common. And with these feelings, I shall retire with satisfaction to that obscurity, from which your Majesty's great goodness called me."† With no less presumption, the Duke, on the 24th, "without having received any invitation from the King," pressed the Duke of Richmond to remain in office as Master General of the Ordnance. But nearly related as his Grace was to Fox, and personally prejudiced as at this time he was against the King, he rejected the overture with disdain. He had seen his name, he said, attached to so many protests against Lord North that it was impossible he could act in concert with that nobleman. He had blamed his friends, he added, when they retired in the summer. He hoped they would not now blame him if he did the same.‡ Fox, in fact, to use Lord Russell's words,

* Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 162. † *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 200.
‡ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. pp. 588—9.

had selected a "field of battle the worst he could have chosen."* Moreover, by his "unwarrantable pretension" in now, for the second time, disputing the King's constitutional right of nominating his own First Minister, he must necessarily render himself more objectionable than ever to his Sovereign.

In the mean time, great indeed was the King's affliction at the prospect of having to surrender at discretion to the man whom he alike regarded as a dangerous political empiric, and as the contaminator of the morals of his first-born. Moreover, his affliction was increased by the humiliating reflection that it was no longer the great Whig party, as a body, which threatened to take him captive, but a mere section of his former tyrants. In this trying crisis, his chief hope of deliverance appears to have lain in the disgust which he rightly imagined that Parliament and his subjects would feel at so unnatural a coalition as that between Fox and Lord North. Little as was the love or respect which he bore for Lord Shelburne,† he would willingly have prevailed upon that nobleman to remain at the head of the Government despite his discomfiture in the House of Commons, in the hope that perseverance and a good cause would be ultimately rewarded with success. "The King," writes William Grenville to Lord Temple on the 19th of February, "is decidedly with Lord Shelburne."‡ Lord Shelburne, however, appears to have regarded the prospect before him as an utterly

* Earl's Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 467.

† See *ante*, pp. 359, 360, and note. In a letter to Lord North, written in March 1778, we find the King speaking of his dislike to Lord Shelburne being inferior only to the aversion which he felt towards Wilkes. *Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol. i. p. 108. It is possible, that the King's remark may only have been meant to apply to Colonel Barré, whose name he couples with that of Lord Shelburne. In another letter, however, the King mentions his having been "highly incensed" at certain language used by Lord Shelburne; *Ibid.*, p. 111; and in a third letter he styles him "the Jesuit." See *ante*, p. 351, and *Memorials of Fox*, vol. i. p. 479.

‡ Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 158.

hopeless one, and accordingly, greatly to the distress, if not the indignation, of the King, he persisted in his resolution of throwing up the reins of Government. "He [the King]" writes Lord Temple, "recapitulated [to me] all the transactions of that period with the strongest encomium upon Mr. Pitt, and with much apparent acrimony pointed at Lord Shelburne, whom he stated to have abandoned a situation which was tenable, and particularly so after the popular resentment had been roused."* According to Lord Holland, Lord Shelburne, on the other hand, not only "always complained that the King had tricked and deserted him in 1782 and 1783," but "always suspected the Court of secretly conniving at his downfall."† How little weight, however, is to be attached to these charges may be gleaned from the foregoing evidence of Mr. Grenville and Lord Temple.

The resignation of Lord Shelburne, combined with the King's aversion to Fox, opened a splendid future for Pitt. On the day on which he delivered his brilliant speech in defence of the Shelburne Administration, he wanted three months to complete his twenty fourth year. Yet, notwithstanding his youth, and brief as had been his apprenticeship in the conduct of public business, it was the opinion of more than one experienced and far-sighted statesman of the day, that he was the fittest person to lead the councils of his Sovereign. Among those persons was Lord Shelburne himself, to whose credit it was, that, when the Lord Advocate Dundas exhorted him to recommend Pitt to the King for the premiership, he readily and zealously undertook the commission. That Lord Shelburne anticipated many objections on the part of the King is extremely probable. Not only on account of Pitt's youth, and from his being the son of the

* Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 303.

† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 479; vol. ii. p. 65. See *Nicholls's Recollections of George 3*, vol. i. p. 51; and *Walpole's Last Journals*, vol. ii. pp. 567—8.

haughty and impracticable Chatham, was the advice likely to be unpalatable to the King, but the political principles of the youthful statesman were, in many respects, diametrically opposed to those of the Court. They differed, indeed, in no material points from those of Fox. Pitt was what, in our time, might be regarded as an advanced liberal. He had spoken, in the House of Commons, in favour of Burke's measure for Economical Reform. He had opposed the war with America and advocated American Independence. He was the avowed enemy of close boroughs, to the existence of which he attributed all the misfortunes which of late years had befallen the country. He had supported Alderman Sawbridge's Bill for shortening the duration of Parliaments, and lastly, he had himself introduced into the House of Commons a measure for Parliamentary Reform.

On the other hand, Pitt had many qualities which were calculated to render him agreeable to the King. He was industrious, and the King regarded industry as a virtue. He was virtuous, and the King venerated virtue. With a bare pittance of three hundred a year, he had rejected a salary of five thousand. When therefore Lord Shelburne mentioned him in the royal closet as being the fittest person to hold the reins of power, the proposition was listened to by the King with anything but dissatisfaction. "The King," writes Dundas on the 25th of February, "received it eagerly, and instantly made the offer to Mr. Pitt with every assurance of the utmost support. Mr. Pitt desired to think of it. I was with him all last night, and Mr. Rigby and I have been with him all this morning, going through the state of the House of Commons. I have little doubt that he will announce himself Minister to-morrow." *— "Dined at Pitt's," writes his friend Wilberforce on the 24th, "and heard of the very surprising propositions." †

* The Lord Advocate to his brother: *Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt*, vol. i. p. 105.
† Life of Wilberforce by his Sons, vol. i. p. 27.

But, strong as must have been the temptation, and great as was the difference between dispensing Coronets and Garters and returning to his barrister's wig and gloomy law-chambers in Lincoln's Inn, Pitt, after having maturely weighed the difficulties which stood in his path, rejected the splendid overture. "The offer," writes his cousin William Grenville to Lord Temple on the 26th, "was made to Pitt of the Treasury with *carte blanche*, which after two days' deliberation he has this day refused." *—"The offer," writes Walpole, "no doubt was dazzling, and so far worth accepting, as *to obtain the Chariot for a day* was glorious at his age." †

Next to Pitt, the King would apparently have preferred seeing Earl Gower at the head of the Treasury,‡ but that nobleman very naturally shrank from undertaking a task for which Pitt had declared himself to be unequal. The King had now no other alternative but to advise with one or other of the leading members of the Coalition, and accordingly it was for Lord North, as being less objectionable to him than either Fox or the Duke of Portland, that he sent. Not that George the Third, at this period, could have regarded the conduct of Lord North with any other feelings than those of grief and anger, if not disgust. So cruelly, indeed, did he imagine himself to have been abandoned and betrayed by his former Minister and friend, that happening to meet the venerable Earl of Guilford in the Queen's apartments, the sight of the father flung him into a

* Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 168.

† Walpole's Journals, vol. ii. p. 591. "He certainly," writes Walpole, "consented for a few hours, but soon retracted. Some thought *Lord Shelburne dissuaded him from jealousy;* but there might be another reason; *the King made the offer very drily and ungraciously.*" *Ibid., note.* We have seen how completely Walpole was wrong in both these surmises. His friends, writes Pitt to his mother on the 25th, "are sanguine in the expectation of his success; *Lord Shelburne himself most warmly so.*"—"The King," adds Pitt, "when I went in yesterday, *pressed me in the strongest manner* to take Lord Shelburne's place." *Stanhope's Life of Pitt*, vol. i. pp. 105—6.

‡ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 590.

state of agitation which he found it impossible to conceal. "My Lord Guilford," he exclaimed, as he wrung the Earl's hands, "did I ever think that Lord North would have delivered me up in this manner to Mr. Fox?" * Lord North, it must be remembered, had been for many years the depository of the King's political secrets. His long and affectionate intimacy with the King had enabled him to acquire a thorough insight into the private weaknesses, prejudices, and predilections of his royal master, and this important knowledge he was now enabled to carry with him to the camp of his new allies. Moreover, since his new relationships with Fox, the former Tory champion of Prerogative had begun to advocate principles which could scarcely fail to be very offensive to the King. He not only adopted Fox's wholesome axiom that no sovereign of this country ought to be his own Minister, but he volunteered the almost republican doctrine that the "appearance of power" was all that ought to be conceded to a King of England.† In his new zeal, he was even led to betray to his Whig friends an unguarded expression which had escaped the King's lips in the course of one of their recent conferences. The King having spoken of Fox's party as a *faction*, Lord North repeated the offensive term to Fox; thus in all probability sowing the seeds of fresh animosity between the King and his domineering subject.‡

Moreover, the personal ingratitude displayed by Lord North deeply wounded and distressed the King. If one, who had served him so long, and whom he had rewarded so liberally, could prove faithless, what other statesman was there in whom the King could place confidence. He had

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 41. Francis first Earl of Guilford—the father of Lord North by Lucy daughter of George Montagu Earl of Halifax—died 4 August 1790, in his eighty-seventh year.

† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 38.

‡ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 597.

loved and trusted Lord North as he had loved and trusted no other Minister since his accession, not even excepting Lord Bute. He had delighted in loading him with favours and honours. He had elevated him to the premiership; had honoured him with the Garter, and had conferred upon him the honourable and lucrative appointment of Warden of the Cinque Ports. He had raised his brother to the rich Bishopric of Winchester, and had bestowed on Lady North the Rangership of Bushy Park. He had not only appointed his father, Lord Guilford, Treasurer to the Queen, but granted him the reversion, on the death of Henry Duke of Newcastle, of a post of great profit in the Customs, with further reversions to two of Lord North's own sons, Francis and Frederick, afterwards successively Earls of Guilford.* To Lord North himself, when labouring under pecuniary difficulties, he had opened his purse, and, on his retiring from office, the King had granted him a pension of four thousand pounds.

During three several interviews which took place at this period between George the Third and his former Minister,† the King earnestly entreated Lord North to break off his connexion with Fox and resume the premiership, while the latter no less urgently pressed his Sovereign to send for the Duke of Portland. The King, however, as he told Lord

* The post in question was that of "Comptroller Inwards and Outwards." In the time of Henry Duke of Newcastle, who held the appointment by patent dated January 24, 1748, the net produce of his receipts, after deduction of all expenses, taking one year, was £1302 13*s.* 4*d.*; the amount of his salary being only £375, and his fees £1348 13*s.* 4*d.* The practice, in the last century, of conferring lucrative posts in the Customs on men of rank appears to have been carried to a disgraceful extent. Thus, in 1784, the Duke of Manchester held the appointment of "Collector Outwards," Sir Banks Jenkinson that of "Collector Inwards;" Lord Pelham was Surveyor General, and Lord Stowell Surveyor. Duties undoubtedly they were called upon to perform, but they appear to have generally managed to perform them by deputy. In 1795, when Francis Earl of Guilford held the appointment of Comptroller, his salary was £255 a-year, with £100 a-year for a deputy, and £20 a-year for a clerk; his remaining emoluments being made up by fees, which, no doubt, were very considerable. *From official information.*

† On the first, third, and fourth of March.

North, was resolved not "to put the Treasury into the hands of the head of a faction," and accordingly the negotiation was broken off.*

Of the steps which, during the next fortnight, the King took to form a Government no very interesting particulars have been recorded. We know, however, that on the 5th of March he was closeted with the Lord Chancellor and Lord Gower; that on the 12th and on the 16th he again saw Lord North; and lastly on the 19th we find him reduced to the bitter and humiliating necessity of sending for the Duke of Portland and authorizing him to take steps for forming an Administration.† The King, in order to avoid what he considered the disgrace of an unconditional surrender, would willingly have retained Lord Thurlow on the Woolsack, but to this concession Fox obstinately refused to agree. "I hope," was the coarse expression of the Prince of Wales at a party at the Duchess of Cumberland's, "that d——d fellow the Chancellor will be turned out." There will be no peace, retorted the Chancellor, till the Prince and Fox are secured in the Tower.‡ The King could now pretty clearly perceive the state of bondage in which it was intended that he should be kept. For instance, when he solicited the Duke of Portland to show him a list of the proposed new "arrangements"—that "profligate List," as William Grenville styles it—not only did the Duke decline to apprize him of any other names but those of the members of the Cabinet, but, as the King told General Conway, a moderate request to be informed of the name of the intended new Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was preferred in vain.§ The King even com-

* Buckingham Papers, vol. i. pp. 172, 173; Walpole's Last Journals, vol. i. p. 597.

† Walpole's Last Journals, vol ii. p. 602, *et sequent.* Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 81, *et sequent.*

‡ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. pp. 599, 600, *note.*

§ *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 609.

plained of being treated with personal incivility. At all events, whatever might be the consequences, he resolved on breaking off the negotiation.* The indignation of Fox and of his sanguine partisans, was naturally excessive. The King, said the Prince of Wales out-loud at his mother's Drawing Room, had refused to accept the Coalition, but by G—! he should be made to agree to it. †—"*George the Fourth*," writes Walpole to Sir Horace Mann on the 18th, "has linked himself with Charles Fox." ‡ Mar. 23.

It was at this time, that George the Third took into his confidence a young scholar in his twenty-fourth year, the second son of that once obnoxious Minister, of whom the King had formerly said that he would rather see the Evil One walk into his closet than George Grenville. This person was William Grenville, afterwards Prime Minister, and better known as Lord Grenville. His first interview with his Sovereign took place at Buckingham House on the 16th of March, on which occasion the King bitterly complained to his new ally of the distracted state of the kingdom, all the misfortunes of which he attributed to the apostasy of Lord North. Political party, he said, no longer consisted, as in former times, of two honourable sections, Whigs and Tories, but was split into factions, the component members of which had no higher object in view than the attainment of power and place, however disastrous might be the consequences to their country.§ Fox he "loaded with

* Buckingham Papers, vol. i. pp. 202—206, 209; Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 605.

† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 599.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 347. Ed. 1858.

§ Bishop Watson expresses the same views in speaking of the Coalition. "It left the country," he writes, "without hope of soon seeing another respectable Opposition on Constitutional grounds, and it stamped on the hearts of millions an impression, which will never be effaced, that Patriotism is a scandalous game played by public men for private ends, and frequently little better than a selfish struggle for power." *Bishop Watson's Anecdotes of his Life*, vol. i. p. 172.

every expression of abhorrence." Of Lord North—"that grateful Lord North!" as he called him—he spoke in strong terms of resentment and disgust. Neither was he much more sparing of his invectives in speaking of the Duke of Portland. It was his conviction, said the King, that Fox and Lord North had found much difficulty in agreeing between themselves,* and it was owing to this difficulty that the country had been left so long without a Government. Yet, added the King, it was upon him that they were now attempting to thrust the odium of the mischievous delay. His personal aversion to both of them, he repeated, was great, but were he compelled to choose one or the other of them for his Minister, he should prefer Lord North.†

Mar. 28. When Mr. Grenville, a few days afterwards, was admitted to a second interview in the royal closet, he found the King's manner much less agitated, and his language much more temperate. At some length he expatiated on the characters of Fox and Lord North, "whom," says Mr. Grenville, "I think he described very justly, though certainly not in the most flattering colours." Lord North, he said, was a man "composed entirely of negative qualities;" one who, for the sake of securing present ease, would risk any difficulty which might threaten the future. Of Fox, so far as his great abilities were concerned, the King spoke in very flattering terms. Yet, while he freely awarded him the merit of genius, of eloquence, and quickness of parts, he insisted that those qualities were neutralized by his want of application, by his scanty knowledge of public business, and more especially by his utter want of discretion and judgment.‡

In the mean time, the King's health, as usually happened

* This we now know to have been the case. See *Walpole's Last Journals*, vol. ii. pp. 604—5.

† Buckingham Papers, vol. i. pp. 189—192. ‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. pp. 212—13.

to him in seasons of great political excitement, threatened to give way under the great distress and humiliation to which he was subjected. Mr. Grenville, for instance, in his account of their first interview, describes him as having been "highly excited," and as speaking with such "inconceivable quickness" that it was with difficulty he could command the King's ear even for a few moments.* The prospect of being enslaved by Fox, the ingratitude of Lord North, and the severance of the American Colonies from the mother-country, evidently, one and all, preyed very heavily on his mind. While in conversation with Mr. Grenville, the King happening casually to allude to American Independence, it struck the young statesman as being a "most bitter pill indeed for him to swallow." Moreover, the continued misconduct of the heir to the throne, who by this time had openly and enthusiastically declared himself a friend to the Coalition, was the source of deep additional distress to the King. The Prince, as we have said, was a member of Brooks's Club, where, as Walpole tells us, the members were not only "strangely licentious" in their talk about their sovereign, but, in their zeal for the interests of the heartless young Prince, even wagered on the duration of the King's reign.† The Duke of Portland was also a member of Brooks's, where either he, or, more probably, his friends, were indelicate enough to allow the King's correspondence with the Duke to be handed about among the frivolous macaronis and idlers of the place, and subjected to what Walpole styles, their "irreverent jests." ‡ These circumstances were doubtless well known to the King, and accordingly, when superadded to with his other cares and distresses, readily account for his distressing state of mind and body. "The King was ill," writes Walpole on the 30th of March, "and fell

* Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 189.
† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 599.
‡ Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 206.

away much with vexation."* He even repeated his threat of retiring to his Hanoverian dominions. The Queen, he told the Lord Advocate Dundas, had consented to his taking this extraordinary step.†

In this, his great distress, the King's thoughts once more turned to Pitt, on whom he again eagerly and repeatedly pressed the premiership. Their correspondence commences on the 23rd of March and ceases on the 25th:—

The King to Mr. Pitt.

"Queen's House, *March* 23, 1783, 8.50, A.M.

"Mr. Pitt is desired to come here in his morning-dress as soon as convenient to him.

"G. R."

"At two this morning," writes Dundas on the 24th, "I was called up by an express from Mr. Pitt. I have seen him this morning, and although I shall not be sanguine upon anything till it is actually fixed, I flatter myself that Mr. Pitt will kiss hands as First Lord of the Treasury on Wednesday next."‡ The King was even more sanguine than Dundas. The same day—at 5·12 P.M.—he writes from Windsor to Pitt—"After the manner I have been personally treated, by both the Duke of Portland and Lord North, *it is impossible I can ever admit either of them into my service.* I therefore trust that Mr. Pitt will exert himself to-morrow to plan his mode of filling up the offices that will be vacant, so as to be able on Wednesday morning to accept the situation his character and talents fit him to hold, when I shall be in town before twelve ready to receive him."§

* Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 611. † *Ibid.*, p. 596.
‡ Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 112.
§ *Ibid.*, vol. i. Appendix, p. ii.

But the young statesman, after having again taken into full consideration the difficulties which beset his path, again deemed it prudent to reject the splendid offer so flatteringly pressed upon him by his Sovereign. On the 25th, Dundas writes to his brother—"It is now my opinion that Mr. Pitt will not accept of the Government. How all this anarchy is to end, God only knows." The following half-reproachful note from the King to Pitt concludes their brief, but remarkable correspondence:—

The King to Mr. Pitt.

"Windsor, *March* 25, 4·35, P.M.

"Mr. Pitt,

"I am much hurt to find you are determined to decline at an hour when those who have any regard for the Constitution, as established by law, ought to stand forth against the most daring and unprincipled faction that the annals of this kingdom ever produced.*

"G. R."

In the mean time, not only had the country been for five weeks without a Government, but the state of public affairs was in the highest degree critical. The Mutiny Bill had not been passed. The treaty of Peace had not been signed, and consequently France, ever ready to take advantage of the internal dissensions of Great Britain, might at any moment feel justified in recommencing hostilities. The Militia, on being disbanded, had not only mutinously insisted upon retaining their clothes, but so helpless had been the War Department as to be compelled to accede to their demand. Lastly, the sailors at Portsmouth refused to sail to the West Indies till paid their arrears of wages, and the Treasury was without the means of satisfying

* Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. Appendix, p. iii.

their claims. "The Government," writes William Grenville to Lord Temple, "is broke up just when a Government was most wanted. Our internal regulations—our loan, our commerce, our army—everything is at a stand, while the candidates for office are arranging their pretensions. In the mean time, we have no money, and our troops and seamen are in mutiny." * According to the King, this lamentable state of things was attributable to "the most unprincipled Coalition the annals of this or any other country can equal;" † while Fox, on the other hand, laid all the blame on his Sovereign. It was "the most insolent domination," he said in the House of Commons, "that ever disgraced a free country." Doubtless, had the Coalition been as popular with the country as it was powerful in Parliament, the King must long since have been compelled to surrender at discretion. The public, however, took part with their Sovereign. Addresses to the House of Commons, in favour of the Treaty of Peace, poured in from all quarters. Generally speaking, the conduct of Fox and his friends was attributed to factious jealousies and selfish ambition. For instance, so zealous a Whig as Bishop Watson admits that the conduct of his former friends was alike pregnant with imminent danger to the Constitution, and had destroyed all his confidence in public men. "I clearly saw," he writes, "that they sacrificed their public principles to private pique, and their honour to their ambition." ‡ Even Fox's most intimate friend, Fitzpatrick, acknowledges that the Coalition was "universally cried out against."—"Unless," he writes to Lord Ossory, "a *real good Government* is the consequence of this juncture, nothing can justify it to the public." § Fox himself, indeed, acknowledged to his friends, that he had taken a step, which, unless

* Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 170.

† *Ibid.*, p. 219.

‡ Bishop Watson's Anecdotes of his Life, vol. i. p. 171.

§ Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. pp. 18, 19.

ultimately crowned with success, must be "pronounced indefensible." *

On the 1st of April, the King, before formally delivering himself up to the tender mercies of Fox and the Duke of Portland, made a final attempt to induce Lord North to accept the premiership. Lord North, however, continued obdurate. "I have told your Majesty," he replied, "that I cannot."—"Then," said the King, "you may tell the Duke of Portland he may kiss my hand to-morrow." † Little doubt can exist as to the continued intensity of the King's distress. To Lord Temple he writes the same day—"I trust the eyes of the nation will soon be opened, or my sorrow may prove fatal to my health if I remain long in this thraldom. I trust you will be steady in your attachment to me, and ready to join other honest men in watching the conduct of this unnatural combination; and I hope many months will not elapse before the Grenvilles, the Pitts, and other men of abilities and character, will relieve me from a situation that nothing could have compelled me to submit to, but the supposition that no other means remained of preventing the public finances from being materially affected." ‡

Little time was allowed to elapse before the names of the members of the new Cabinet were announced to the public. The Duke of Portland was gazetted as First Lord of the Treasury; Lord North and Fox, as Secretaries of State; Lord John Cavendish, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord Stormont, President of the Council; and Lord Keppel, First Lord of the Admiralty. The Great Seal was put into Commission. Burke, notwithstanding his splendid abilities and the great services which he had rendered his party, was again excluded from the Cabinet, being

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 62.
† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 612.
‡ Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 219.

obliged to content himself with his former lucrative post of Paymaster of the Forces. Sheridan was honoured with no higher a post than Secretary of the Treasury. Pitt was strongly urged to join the new Administration, but unhesitatingly refused. *

Prosperous times had now arrived for the members of Brooks's and the men of pleasure. Of Fox's intimate friends, the Earl of Northington was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Richard Fitzpatrick, Secretary at War. Of Fox's old schoolfellows at Eton, the Earl of Carlisle was made Privy Seal; William Windham was appointed Secretary for Ireland; Anthony Morris Storer was in due time nominated Minister Plenipotentiary at Paris during the absence of the Duke of Manchester; while for another Eton schoolfellow, Earl Fitzwilliam, Fox, as will presently be seen, had in contemplation a still more important office. It was to the credit of one at least of these men of fashion, that he not only admitted his own unworthiness, but expostulated with Fox on the inexpediency of his appointments. "I am sure," writes Lord Northington to Fox from Ireland, a few months afterwards, "men of abilities, knowledge of business, and experience, ought to be employed here, both in the capacity of Lord Lieutenant and Secretary; not gentlemen taken wild from Brooks's to make their *dénouement* in public life. I feel very forcibly the truth of this observation in my own instance, and wish heartily it was better supplied." †

When, on the 2nd of April, the new Ministers kissed hands, the King is said to have had some difficulty in concealing his vexation. Lord Townshend, who was present, humorously observed that, on Fox kissing hands, he ob-

* Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 114. To Lord Ossory, Fox writes on the 9th of September;—"If Pitt could be persuaded—but I despair of it—I am convinced if he could, he would do more real service to the country than any man ever did." *Earl Russell's Mem. of Fox*, vol. ii. p. 208.

† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 182.

served his Majesty "turn back his ears and eyes, just like the horse at Astley's when the tailor, he had determined to throw, was getting on him." * Nevertheless the King behaved both towards Fox and the Duke of Portland in a gracious manner. Lord North, on the contrary, he received with a marked coldness which denoted even aversion. †

To the country at large, the new Administration was scarcely more acceptable than it was to the King. To use the words of Walpole, all parties, in the opinion of the public, had become so "jumbled and prostituted that no shadow of principle seemed to remain in any party." ‡ It was little to the credit of the new Ministers, that, when they submitted to Parliament the articles of Peace, which they proposed to substitute for Lord Shelburne's rejected Treaty, they were found to be almost identical with those, which, owing to Fox's and Lord North's opposition, had not only been the means of overthrowing the late Government,§ but had nearly reduced the country to a state of anarchy. Still less was it to the credit of Fox and his Whig colleagues, that they proved false to those great principles of freedom which constituted their main claim to popular favour. A wise and strong measure of Parliamentary Reform might have repaired most of the defects in the Constitution, but unhappily Burke and Lord North were agreed in opposing any change in the existing system of popular representation, and consequently when Pitt introduced into Parliament a May 7.
motion for disfranchising corrupt boroughs, and giving additional members to the counties and metropolitan districts, he was defeated by so large a majority as 144. "Nothing done in Reform!" writes Lord Temple to Lord Northington, "except the creation of new offices, and the whole attention of Ministers exclusively turned to the book of Numbers." ‖

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 28.
† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 612. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 621.
§ Edinburgh Review, vol. xcix. p. 50. ‖ Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 282.

The result of the coalition between Fox and Lord North could have been gratifying to the personal vanity of neither. Fox, though his former constituents returned him for Westminster, was hissed and hooted as he stood on the hustings.* The three-per-cent consols had been at seventy when the Coalition entered into office. Before the end of the year they had declined to fifty-six.† Ridicule as well as invective was plentifully levelled at the members of the new Administration. "Caricatures," says Mr. Wright, "were hurled against them in greater numbers, and in a better style of execution, than had been witnessed for several years."‡ The most notable artists were Sayer, and a young man, James Gillray, who afterwards shone as the greatest of all British caricaturists. Fox himself once observed that Sayer's caricatures had done him more mischief than all the attacks made on him in Parliament or by the press.§ Walpole incidentally speaks of the "cart-loads of abuse and satiric prints" which were current at the time.‖ The Duke of Portland, as being a mere cypher in the hands of others, naturally came in for his full share of derision. It was one of the many jokes which were flung at him, that the Duke was "a fit block to *hang Whigs* on."¶ The Duke's elevation, remarked George Selwyn, reminded him of the old Puritan Tract—"A Shove to an heavy-breeched Christian."** "The nation," writes Walpole, "certainly did not call for his Grace, who, till his nomination to Ireland, scarce an hundred men knew to exist. He has lived in ducal dudgeon, with half-a-dozen toad-eaters, secluded from mankind behind the ramparts of Burlington wall, and overwhelmed by debts, without a visible expense of two thousand pounds a-year."††

* Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 115; Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 616.
† Hughes' Hist. of England, vol. iii. p. 185.
‡ England under the House of Hanover, vol. ii. p. 74.
§ Twiss' Life of Eldon, vol. i. p. 162. ‖ Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 351.
¶ Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 351. ** *Ibid.*, p. 261. †† *Ibid.*, p. 253.

Considering the broad differences of opinion and principle which existed between the King and Fox, their personal intercourse seems to have been conducted in a much more friendly manner than might reasonably have been anticipated. "The King," writes Fox on the 18th of April, "continues to behave with every degree of civility, and sometimes even with cordiality;" and again he writes on the 26th of July—"No peerages, no marks of support, but civility enough." * Lord Holland, indeed, charges the King with missing no opportunity of "twitting" his Minister on the subject of the treaty of Peace, but, as far as we have been able to discover, on no better authority than the following extracts from the King's letters:—

The King to the Right Hon. Charles J. Fox.

"WINDSOR, *July 19th*, 1783, 40 min. past 7 a.m.

"Every difficulty in conducting peace this country has alone itself to blame [for]. *After the extraordinary and never to be forgot vote of February*, 1782,† and the hurry for negotiation that after ensued, it is no wonder that our enemies, seeing our spirit so fallen, have taken advantage of it." ‡

The King to the Same.

"WINDSOR, *August* 1783, 48 min. past 9 a.m.

"I cannot say that I am so surprised at France not putting the last strokes to the definitive treaty so soon as we may wish; as our having totally disarmed, in addition to the extreme anxiety shown for peace during the whole period that has ensued [since] the end of February 1782, certainly makes her feel that she can have no reason to apprehend any evil from so slighting a proceeding." §

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 199.

† The King evidently alludes to General Conway's motion in the House of Commons on the 27th of February 1782 for discontinuing the American war; a motion which was carried against Lord North's Ministry by a majority of 234 against 215. He told Lord North at one of their recent interviews that "since the vote respecting the American war" he had felt the greatest indifference on political subjects.—*Memorials of Fox*, vol. ii. p. 154.

‡ Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 133. § *Ibid.*, p. 141.

The King to the Same.

(Extract.)

"WINDSOR, *September 7th*, 1783, 7 a.m.

"Nothing can be more avowed than the desertion of the Court of Lisbon; but after Britain has so much lowered herself, can any one be surprised that Courts treat her accordingly.*

"G. R."

That the King, when the subject of American Independence happened to be touched upon, may have occasionally given vent to an irritable expression, is not improbable. It was a subject, which, so long as he retained his reason, never failed to occasion him the most poignant mortification, and accordingly we are assured that Fox, in his intercourse with his Sovereign, ever sedulously avoided the topic. We are further assured that Fox did his utmost to conciliate the King; nor was George the Third insensible to the consideration shown him by his Minister. Long afterwards he volunteered the admission that Fox had at least behaved to him like a *gentleman*, and he added—in reference apparently to the treatment which he formerly experienced at the hands of George Grenville, and of the Duke of Bedford—that it was of no slight consideration to have to deal with *gentlemen*.†

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 153.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. pp. 67, 68. "It has always been my opinion," writes Fox, "and, I believe, always will be, that power, (whether over a people or a King,) obtained by gentle means, by the good-will of the person to be governed, and, above all, by degrees, rather than by a sudden exertion of strength, is in its nature more durable and firm, than any advantage that can be obtained by contrary means." *Fox to the Marquis of Rockingham, January 24th*, 1779: *Memorials of Fox*, vol. i. p. 207. "The King's conduct towards the Coalition Ministry," writes Sir Walter Scott, "was equally candid, open, and manly. He used no arts to circumvent or deceive the counsellors whom he unwillingly received into the Cabinet; nor did he, on the other hand, impede their measures by petty opposition. While they were Ministers he gave them the full power of their situation; not affecting, at the same time, to conceal that they were not those whose assistance he would voluntarily have chosen." *Prose Works*, vol. iv. p. 338.

CHAPTER XLI.

The Prince of Wales comes of age—The large provision, proposed for the Prince by Ministers, disapproved by the King—A crisis avoided by a prudent concession on the part of the Prince—Fox's India Bill—The King and the Country alike dissatisfied with the proposed mode of dispensing the vast patronage of India—The Bill strenuously opposed by Pitt, but passes the House of Commons by a large majority—Opposed in the Lords by Earl Temple, with the sanction of the King, and thrown out—Consequent change of Ministry—Pitt appointed Premier—William Pitt and Charles James Fox, their early training, personal tastes, characteristic qualities, and political rivalship.

THE new Ministers had not been many weeks in office before they were guilty of an act of discourtesy towards the King, which, even if he had had no other grounds of complaint against them, would, we imagine, have justified him, had he thought proper to remove them from power. The Prince of Wales being within a few weeks of attaining the age of twenty-one, it had become necessary to settle his future establishment. The Shelburne Ministry, willing to bid high for the favours of the heir to the throne, had, when in office, proposed to confer on the Prince a revenue of £100,000 a year, and consequently now that his "dear Charles" was in power, the Prince might reasonably expect at his hands a similar liberal provision. This sum, however, happened to be double the amount of the allowance which had been enjoyed by the King's father, the late Prince of Wales, notwithstanding he was a husband, and the father of a numerous family;* for which, and other,

* Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 628.

reasons, two at least of the Cabinet, Lord North and Lord John Cavendish, insisted that the proposed amount was an extravagant one, and that the Prince ought to be satisfied with £50,000 a year.* Fox, however, had pledged his word to the dissolute young prince, and, rather than depart from his engagement, was resolved to resign even though his resignation should break up the Ministry. As for the heir to the throne, he is said to have been in ecstasies at the near prospect of exchanging the tedium and trammels of paternal authority for the unlimited indulgence of his youthful pleasures.

In the mean time, although the King ought unquestionably to have been the first person consulted, it was not till the 11th of June, and then only in casual conversation with the Duke of Portland, that he learned how handsome was the provision which the Duke and Fox proposed to make for his son.† The want of consideration thus shown him by "his son's Ministry"‡—as he is said to have called the Coalition—could not fail to offend and hurt him deeply. In the first place, it was far from being either his wish or his policy to render his prodigal and disobedient son so suddenly and so entirely independent of parental control; and, in the next place, assuming the heir to the throne to have a fair claim to the liberal endowment proposed for him by Ministers, surely it was to his own father, and not to a party whose political opinions were diametrically opposed to those of his father, that the Prince should have been taught to feel himself indebted. Never, exclaimed the King in the bitterness of

* Fox himself writes to Lord Northington on the 17th of July;—"The truth is, that excepting the Duke of Portland and Lord Keppel, there was not one Minister who would have fought with any heart in this cause. I could see clearly from the beginning, long before the difficulties appeared, that Lord North and Lord John, though they did not say so, thought the large establishment extravagant." *Memorials of Fox*, vol. ii. p. 116.

† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 628.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 614.

his feelings, could he forgive an Administration that could sacrifice the interests of the public to gratify the wishes of an "ill-advised young man."* He is even said to have personally reproached the Duke of Portland with setting up his son in opposition to himself.†

The King's mind, however, was soon made up on the subject. Taking into consideration, he said, the heavy expenses of the late war and the financial embarrassment under which the country at present laboured, he could on no account think of further burthening his subjects with an annual charge amounting to so large a sum as £100,000.‡ He was of opinion that £50,000 a year was quite a sufficient allowance for his son, and that sum he was ready to pay him out of his own Civil List. This independent and resolute conduct on the part of the King, in opposition to the strong remonstrances of a majority of the Cabinet, clearly evinced to Ministers how insecure they were in their places, nor, in the opinion of Fox, could the King, had he wished to get rid of them, have been afforded a much more favourable opportunity. "They would have had on their side," he writes to Lord Northington, "the various cries of paternal authority—economy—moderate establishment—mischief-making between father and son, and many other plausible topics."§ Eventually, to the credit of the Prince of Wales, the question was set at rest by his consenting to release his friends from their obligation. Walpole indeed would have us believe that he fell into a fever from vexation, but, on the other hand, we have the authority of Fox himself that the Prince behaved "in the handsomest manner."‖ "I believe," writes Fox to Lord Northington, "he was

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 113.
† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 631.
‡ Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 113.
§ *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 115.
‖ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 629; Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 114.

naturally very averse to it, but Colonel Lake,* and others whom he most trusts, persuaded him to it, and the intention of doing so came from him to us spontaneously. If it had not, I own I should have felt myself bound to follow his royal highness's line upon the subject, though I know that by so doing I should destroy the Ministry in the worst possible way, and subject myself to the imputation of the most extreme wrong-headedness. I shall always, therefore, consider the Prince's having yielded a most fortunate event, and shall always feel myself proportionally obliged to him and to those who advised him." † It was finally arranged, as originally proposed by the King, that he should allow his son £50,000 a year, over and above the revenue derived from the Duchy of Cornwall which is stated to have amounted at this time to no more than £12,000 a year. The only demand made upon Parliament was for £30,000, to defray the Prince's debts, and for a like sum to assist in forming his establishment. ‡

How deeply distressing this whole affair was to the King there is ample evidence to prove. He not only told Lord Hertford that he every morning wished himself eighty, or ninety, or dead, but, in one of his interviews with the Duke of Portland, was so affected as to burst into "an agony of tears." § Still, obnoxious as were his present Ministers to him, he seems to have afforded them little cause for complaint. Much as he disliked them, he told Lord Hertford, he was resolved to give them fair play. ‖ Fox was even sanguine enough to think that Ministers were "something stronger" than before the recent altercation. "I believe," he writes, "the King is neither pleased nor displeased with us; that

* Gerard, created, October 31st, 1807, Viscount Lake, as a reward for his brilliant services in India. He was at this period First Equerry and Commissioner of the Horse to the Prince of Wales. He died in February, 1808, at the age of sixty-five.

† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 117.

‡ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 630.

§ *Ibid.*, pp. 629, 633.

‖ *Ibid.*, p. 633.

he has no inclination to do anything to serve us, or to hurt us, and that he has no view to any other Administration which he means to substitute in lieu of us. If this be so, we shall last the summer, and when Parliament meets, I own I am sanguine." On the 12th of August, Fox again writes—"His Majesty continues, just as he was, very civil, but no more." *

But, dire as was the offence which Fox had recently given his Sovereign, he was preparing to inflict upon him a still heavier blow, in the shape of his memorable India Bill. Parliament had been prorogued on the 16th of July and had reassembled on the 11th of November, seven days after which latter date Fox introduced into the House of Commons his plan for the better government of the King's East India dominions. However laudable may have been Fox's intentions; however oppressive might have been the past government of those regions by the East India Company, and however well calculated Fox's measure may have been to rescue the natives from the cruel tyranny by which they were afflicted,† certain it is, that, in drawing up the Bill for the consideration of Parliament, the opportunity which it

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. pp. 118, 200.

† In justice to the King, it must be stated that he was neither blind to the abuses which existed in India, nor averse to a wholesome reform in the Government of that country. When, eight months afterwards, Pitt, as Prime Minister, brought in *his* India Bill, we find the King writing to him as follows;—

"WINDSOR, *July* 17, 1784.

"It is with infinite pleasure I have received Mr. Pitt's note containing the agreeable account of the Committee on the East India Bill having been opened by the decision of so very decided a majority. I trust this will prevent much trouble being given in its further progress, and that this measure may lay a foundation for, by degrees, correcting those shocking enormities in India that disgrace human nature, and, if not put a stop to, threaten the expulsion of the Company out of that wealthy region. I have the more confidence of success from knowing Mr. Pitt's good sense, which will make him not expect that the present experiment shall at once prove perfect; but that by an attentive eye, and an inclination to do only what is right, he will, as occasions arise, be willing to make such improvements as may by degrees bring this arduous work into some degree of perfection.

"G. R."

—*Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt*, vol. i. p. xiii. Appendix. See also *ante*, vol. i. p. 387.

afforded of diminishing the power of the Crown, and, at the same time, of promoting the political interests of Fox and his friends, had not been overlooked. By its provisions, the Government of India was to be transferred, for a certain number of years, from the East India Company to a Board to consist of seven Commissioners, who were not to be removable by the Crown, except on an Address of either House of Parliament. Thus this measure, if carried into effect, would have conveyed to the Minister of the day the immense patronage of India; would have rendered him, for a long period to come, independent of the Crown, and, by reducing the Sovereign to a corresponding state of subjection, would have been at direct variance with the spirit of the Constitution. It was a measure which, as Fox himself was well aware, could only be carried into law by daring and tact of no common order, and, by what Fox's enemies would doubtless add, some dereliction of political probity. To his friend, Lord Northington, Fox writes that it is "a vigorous and hazardous measure on which all depended;"* while the less sanguine and more sagacious Lord North regarded it in a still more "hazardous" point of view. He considered it, he said, "a good receipt to knock up an Administration."† Of the new Board, Earl Fitzwilliam was designed to be Chairman, and George North, Lord North's eldest son, one of its Members.

But, in the general estimation of the public, it was not so much the encroachment on the royal prerogative—which being only indirectly aimed at, was scarcely perceptible—that rendered Fox's measure a perilous one, but the sweeping violation which it contemplated of chartered rights and immunities. No sooner, then, were its spirit and tendency fully comprehended by the community, than it excited an amount of indignation throughout the country, of which

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 171.

† Nicholls's Recollections of the Reign of George 3, vol. i. p. 56.

it would be difficult to give an exaggerated description. "Tories and Democrats," writes Lord Macaulay, "joined in pronouncing the proposed Board an unconstitutional body. It was to consist of Fox's nominees. The effect of his bill was to give, not to the Crown, but to him personally, whether in office or opposition, an enormous power, a patronage sufficient to counterbalance the patronage of the Treasury and of the Admiralty, and to decide the elections for fifty boroughs. He knew, it was said, that he was hateful alike to King and people; and he had devised a plan which would make him independent of both." * Wilberforce inveighed against the measure to his constituents at York as the offspring of that "unnatural conjunction" the Coalition—"marked with the features of both its parents—bearing token to the violence of the one, and the corruption of the other." † Pitt opposed the progress of the measure through the House of Commons with all the eloquence at his command. He admitted, indeed, that Reform was required in India, but not a Reform, he added, which threatened to break through every principle of equity and justice. Should the Bill pass into law, he continued, no public securities whatever—no public corporation—not the Bank of England—not even the Magna Charta itself, would be secure from the innovations of a "ravenous Coalition," whose harpy jaws were gaping to swallow a patronage amounting to more than two millions of money sterling.‡ Nor was it in Parliament only, and for party purposes alone, that Pitt denounced his rival's measure as fraught with danger to the Constitution, and as an unjustifiable confiscation of vested property and rights. To the Duke of Rutland he writes on the 22nd of November;—"The Bill which Fox has brought in relative to India will be, one way or other, decisive for or against the Coalition.

* Macaulay's Biographies, p. 167. † Life of Wilberforce, vol. i. p. 54.
‡ Belsham's Memoirs of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 338, 339.

It is, I really think, the boldest and most unconstitutional measure ever attempted; transferring, at one stroke, in spite of all charters and compacts, the immense influence and patronage of the East to Charles Fox, in or out of Office. I think it will with difficulty, if at all, find its way through our House, and can never succeed in yours."* Fox thought otherwise. To Lord Ossory he writes on the 21st—"I am very confident: but every vote [in the House of Commons] will tell on account of the House of Lords afterwards. If we can beat them, as I hope to do, by a hundred or one hundred and fifty, it will give a most complete blow to the enemy, [from] which they will find it difficult to recover."†

It was during the progress of the India Bill through Parliament that Burke delivered one of the most touching,
Dec. 1. ingenious and beautiful orations, that had ever been listened to in the House of Commons.‡ Fox, too, defended his favourite measure with splendid ability, and accordingly, by the united efforts of these two gifted men, combined with the staunch support which they received from Lord North and his friends, the Bill was carried through the House of
Dec. 8. Commons by a majority of 208 against 102. The following day, Fox, attended by a large assemblage of members of the Lower House, presented the Bill in triumph at the bar of the House of Lords.

Previously to recording the fate of the famous India Bill in the House of Lords, it becomes necessary to refer to a young nobleman who, though not in power, exercised at this period no slight influence upon public affairs. George, second Earl Temple, and afterwards first Marquis of Buckingham, was the eldest son of the King's old political antagonist, George Grenville, and nephew to Richard Earl Temple,

* Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. pp. 140—1.
† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 215.
‡ Prior's Life of Burke, vol. i. pp. 438, 439, 2nd Edition.

to whose titles and noble estates he had succeeded in the month of September 1779. His principal faults are said to have been obstinacy, avarice, overweening pride, and, if Walpole is to be believed, no very nice regard for truth.* Though gifted with talents of no very high order, he was on the other hand indefatigably industrious and inordinately ambitious. On the formation of the Coalition Ministry, he had highly gratified the King by throwing up his post of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and separating his interests from those of the Duke of Portland and Fox.† Since that time he seems to have sedulously applied himself to win the favour and confidence of his Sovereign. Arriving in England at the particular time when the King and his Ministers were at issue on the subject of the Prince of Wales's establishment, he was immediately admitted to an interview at St. James's, when he entered so warmly into the King's feelings, and subsequently took so active a part against the Prince's interests, that the latter was heard to declare he would never forgive him.‡ Now, then, he was afforded a further, and no less favourable, opportunity of ingratiating himself with his Sovereign by opposing the India Bill, to which measure he not only found the King in the highest degree hostile, but incensed beyond measure against his Ministers for having brought it under the consideration of Parliament. He never would give his confidence, he told Lord Temple, to such a Ministry as the present one. He would take the first opportunity of dismissing them from his service.§

It used to be generally imagined that the particular fact of Fox's Bill having a tendency to impair the royal authority, was for the first time pointed out to the King

* Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 622.
† Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 192.
‡ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 630.
§ Buckingham Papers, vol. i. p. 303.

by Lord Temple, and then, in an interview which took place between them on the 11th of December, four days before that appointed for the second reading of the Bill in the House of Lords—

> "On that great day when Buckingham, by pairs,
> Ascended, Heaven-impelled, the King's back stairs;
> And panting, breathless, strained his lungs to show
> From Fox's Bill what mighty ills would flow;
> Still, as with stammering tongue he told his tale,
> Unusual terrors Brunswick's heart assail,
> Wide starts his white wig from the Royal ear,
> And each particular hair stands stiff with fear."
>
> *The Rolliad.*

But, however artfully and insidiously the Bill may have been drawn up, it is difficult to imagine that the dangerous consequences with which it threatened the Crown, should have escaped the discernment of a monarch at once so shrewd, and so jealous of his prerogative, as George the Third. Moreover, that the King's apprehensions had been aroused at a much earlier period than has been commonly supposed, is proved by a document which exists in Lord Temple's handwriting, in which the Bill is spoken of as "a plan to take more than half the royal power," and on which are indorsed the words "*Delivered by Lord Thurlow December* 1*st* 1783."* In furtherance of certain advice contained in that paper, Lord Temple, in his interview with the King on the 11th, was furnished by him with written authority to intimate to such Peers as he might think proper, that the King disapproved of the Bill as being unconstitutional and subversive of the rights of the Crown, and further that his Majesty would regard those who voted for it as his enemies.† Up to this time, Fox had been tolerably sanguine as to the fate of his measure in the House

* Buckingham Papers, vol. i. pp. 288—9.
† Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 220.

of Lords, but no sooner was the fact of Lord Temple's commission whispered about, than misgiving, if not despondency, took possession of the Ministerial camp.

On the appointed day, the 15th of December, the second reading of the India Bill took place in the House of Lords. There Lord Temple denounced it as an INFAMOUS BILL against which he was only too happy to enter his protest, while Lord Thurlow inveighed against it with all the irony and the eloquence at his command. "As I abhor tyranny in all its shapes," he vehemently exclaimed, "I shall oppose most strenuously this strange attempt to destroy the true balance of our Constitution. I wish to see the Crown great and respectable, but if the present Bill should pass, it will no longer be worthy of a man of honour to wear. The King, in fact"—and he fixed his eyes pointedly on the Prince of Wales as he spoke—"will take the diadem from his own head and place it on the head of Mr. Fox."* In the course of a subsequent debate the venerable Lord Camden delivered a similar opinion. "Were this bill," he exclaimed, "to pass into law, we should see the King of England and the King of Bengal contending for superiority in the British Parliament."†

In the mean time, the King's wishes had been communicated to certain of the lords spiritual and temporal, on whose minds it produced the effect which had been contemplated. "The Bishops waver," writes Fitzpatrick the same day to Lord Ossory, "and the Thanes fly from us."‡ The true merits of the Bill—the welfare and happiness of thirty

* Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. pp. 146—7. Lord Thurlow's words very probably suggested to Dr. Johnson the well-known remark which he made to Boswell, that it had become "a doubt whether the country should be ruled by the sceptre of George the Third or the tongue of Fox." *Croker's Boswell's Life of Johnson*, p. 762, Ed. 1848.

† Belsham's Memoirs of George 3, vol. iii. p. 344.

‡ Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 220.—Fitzpatrick of course alludes to the idle belief which, even at this late period, had not entirely died out, in Lord Bute's secret influence with the King.

millions of people—were overlooked in the excitement produced by selfish interests, by party zeal, and officious loyalty. "Instantly," writes Lord Macaulay, "a troop of Lords of the Bedchamber, of Bishops who wished to be translated, and of Scotch peers who wished to be re-elected, made haste to change sides." * In the mean time, not only had Lord Temple's share in this delicate transaction become more than suspected, but when taxed by the Duke of Richmond with complicity, his reply almost amounted to an admission of the fact. It was notorious, he said, that the King had recently honoured him with a conference, and, as an hereditary counsellor of the Crown, he had the privilege of advising his Majesty. "I *did*," he added, "give my advice. What it was I shall not now declare; it is lodged in his Majesty's breast. But though I will not declare what my advice to my Sovereign was, I will tell your Lordships negatively what it was not. It was not friendly to the principle and object of this Bill." †

Dec. 17. The Bill was finally thrown out of the House of Lords by a majority of ninety-five votes against seventy-six. The Prince of Wales had voted in favour of the Ministry on the second reading of the Bill, but was absent from the House at the final Division.

The King's conduct on this occasion, in caballing against his own Ministers, has been frequently impugned, nor can it be denied that the defeat of the obnoxious measure was effected by means which no true friend of the Constitution could thoroughly approve. But the King had unquestionably received great provocation. "If it be ever excusable in a King of England," writes Lord Chancellor Campbell, "to cabal against his Ministers, George the Third may well be defended for the course he now took; for they had been forced upon him by a fac-

* Macaulay's Biographies, p. 168.

† Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 150.

tious intrigue, and public opinion was decidedly in his favour."* Moreover, it has been argued that Fox and his friends had set the King the example of infringing the canons of the Constitution, by denying him, in the first place, his undoubted right of choosing his own First Minister; and secondly by the underhand manner in which they had attempted to diminish the kingly authority by means of the provisions of the India Bill. True it is, that the King had introduced a dangerous precedent by opposing the influence of the Crown to the wishes and votes of a majority of the representatives of the people, as expressed by the recent Division on the Bill in the House of Commons. In extenuation, however, of this irregular procedure, must be taken into account the notorious facts that the late majority in the Commons had been procured by an unnatural coalition of two hostile factions, and that its verdict was entirely opposed to the known wishes of his subjects. The King therefore resolved to appeal, as Fox had appealed before him, from the representative to the constituent body. Well might he have addressed to Fox the words which George the Second had formerly addressed to the elder Pitt—"Sir, you have taught me to look for the sense of my people in other places than the House of Commons."†

In the mean time, the King had been waiting with great impatience the result of the Division in the House of Lords. On the morning after it had taken place, although he was present at the usual "meet" of the royal stag hounds, not only was his mind obviously distracted from the amusement of the day, but when the hounds threw off, he continued to linger behind, as if momentarily expecting the arrival of important intelligence. At length, according to the account of Sir Andrew Hammond who was present, a horseman was seen approaching, who, having

* Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. v. p. 555.
† Macaulay's Essays, vol. ii. p. 187. Edition 1846.

ridden up to him and presented him with a letter, the King eagerly broke open the seal, rapidly glanced over the contents of the packet, and then throwing his arms wide open, emphatically exclaimed—"Thank God! it is all over; the House has thrown out the Bill, so there is an end of Mr. Fox."* "I have heard the King speak of him [Fox]," writes Sir Andrew Hammond two years afterwards, "with that indignation that I really believe he would rather sacrifice everything than allow him to come forward."† The excitement of the day, however, was not yet at an end. The King had hoped and expected that Ministers would have immediately resigned their appointments, and accordingly, when night closed in, and their resignations failed to arrive, messengers were dispatched by his orders to the two Secretaries of State, Lord North and Fox, conveying his commands to them to transmit at once their seals of office to the palace through their respective Under Secretaries. It was one o'clock in the morning,‡ and Lord North had retired to rest with Lady North, when the Under Secretary of State for the Home Office, Sir Evan Nepean, knocked at his bedchamber door and desired to see him on most important business. "Then," said the discarded Minister, "you must see Lady North too;" at the same time intimating his determination not to get out of bed. Sir Evan Nepean having accordingly been admitted and declared his errand, Lord North delivered to him the key of the closet in which the seals of office were kept, and then quietly turned round to sleep again.§ At the same time the other Ministers received their dismissal by letters signed TEMPLE.

Dec. 19. On the following day, the new Cabinet, with Pitt at the

* Quarterly Review, vol. cv., p. 482.

† Auckland Correspondence, vol. i. p. 362.

‡ Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 446. Annual Reg. for 1783, p. 223.

§ Massey's Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 209, *note*.

head of it, was formed with the full approval of the King. That day Mr. Pepper Arden, a personal friend of Pitt and a young barrister like himself, moved in an excited House of Commons that a new writ be issued for the borough of Appleby, in the room of the Right Honourable William Pitt who had accepted the offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Thus did this remarkable man—whom, scarcely forty-eight hours previously, Fox had denounced as "a boy without judgment, experience, or knowledge of the world"*—become at the age of twenty-four Prime Minister of England! So overwhelming, it may be mentioned, was the majority of votes which Lord North and Fox were notoriously able to array against him, and consequently so contemptible appeared to be his chances of establishing himself in power, that Pepper Arden's announcement was responded to from the crowded benches of the Coalition with a shout of derision.† Yet, on that day, with Pitt for its chief, commenced an Administration which was destined to be one of the longest in the annals of our country.

In addition to Pitt as First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, the members of the new Cabinet consisted of the Marquis of Carmarthen and Earl Temple as Secretaries of State; of Earl Gower as President of the Council; the Duke of Rutland as Privy Seal; Earl Howe as First Lord of the Admiralty, and Lord Thurlow as Lord Chancellor. The Duke of Richmond, notwithstanding his former close political connexion with the Rockingham Whigs, and the grounds for complaint which he imagined he had against the King, accepted the office of Master of the Horse, though without a seat in the Cabinet.

There is perhaps no narrative in biographical literature more interesting than that of the gallant, persevering, and

* Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 603.

† Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 156.

successful struggle, against almost insuperable difficulties, which preceded the rise of the younger Pitt to power. If anything could add to the interest of that struggle, we must search for it in the story of his personal rivalry with Fox, and also in those marked differences in their several characters and conduct, which led to the one achieving power almost in boyhood, and to the other being excluded from it nearly all his life. As regards Fox—if powerful aristocratic connexion—if brilliant eloquence and administrative abilities of a high order—if a thorough knowledge of the House of Commons and fifteen years' experience of public affairs—if, independent of good moral conduct, an ardent love of his country and a thorough detestation of tyranny—be deemed qualities of sufficient consideration to justify a statesman in aspiring to fill the highest office in the State—then had Fox a prior and superior claim to the premiership than that of his younger rival. But, in the eyes of the King and of the majority of the public, the purity of Pitt's private life, combined with the lofty political rectitude of which he had afforded proof, amply made amends for the disadvantages of youth and a comparatively brief apprenticeship in politics. In respect to the personal rivalry between Pitt and Fox, there were many circumstances which invested it with a peculiar interest. Their fathers had been political antagonists before them. Each of them was a younger son, and had been the favourite son, of his father. Each of those fathers had not only taken a deep pride in the precocious talents of his offspring, but had carefully prepared him to shine in the great political arena in which he himself had been distinguished. There were even traits in the characters of the sons in which they resembled each other. Both shrank from mounting, by grovelling means, to power; both were constitutionally intrepid; both were, comparatively speaking, poor; both recoiled from enriching themselves by the spoils of office.

The education of Pitt had been very differently conducted from that of Fox. Fox had been educated at a public school. Pitt had been privately brought up at home, under the immediate eye of the illustrious Chatham. Years afterwards, when William Pitt had become Prime Minister, it used to be a favourite taunt of the wits at Brooks's that he had been "taught by his dad on a stool." * That home, however, had been the resort of the Muses, and of all the domestic virtues. "When his lordship's health would permit," writes Bishop Tomline, "he never suffered a day to pass without giving instruction of some sort to the children, and seldom without reading a chapter of the Bible with them." † Lord Chatham was not only proud of his son's abilities, but had early discovered the boy's precocious ambition, which he missed no opportunity of disciplining to wise and noble ends. The great object of his life was to train up his son to rival him as an orator and statesman, with which view he encouraged the boy to speak on all occasions without reserve; at the same time, sparing no pains to teach him to express his thoughts with terseness, and to reply with readiness. For the purpose of improving his naturally clear and deep-toned voice he caused him to recite the noblest passages of Shakespeare and Milton. Pitt's friends, after his death, used to mention the delight with which they had heard him recite his favourite passage in Milton, the grand speech of Belial in Pandemonium, in the second book of Paradise Lost.‡ The Earl, as a further means of disciplining his son to speak with fluency, especially encouraged classical dramatic representations among his children. To his friend Hollis he writes on the 21st of October, 1772;—"Our young people are

* Macaulay's Biographies, p. 145.

† Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 5. The Bishop informs us that he had frequent opportunities of observing Mr. Pitt's accurate knowledge of the Bible.

‡ Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. pp. 7—9. Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 8. Macaulay's Biographies, p. 145.

flattered and alarmed with the thought of exhibiting to Mr. Hollis their puerile powers of the Scene. Bold is the attempt, but papa and mama, who not undelighted rock this cradle of Tragedy, exhort them to dismiss their fears."* Again, the great Earl writes on the 26th of November following—"The large approbation he [Hollis] is so good to express of the novitiate of the small tragedians, could not but touch sensibly, and powerfully animate, the various parties concerned in a picture drawn in the spirit of Athens or Rome, and which would have been flattering, wherever applied, in either. Old and young all beg to offer their united grateful acknowledgements for sentiments so partial." † On one occasion we find Lord Shelburne a spectator of one of these juvenile performances. "Our youthful aspirers to honest fame," writes Lord Chatham to him on the 22nd of January, 1773, "are, as I wished to see them, excessively vain of the applause with which you honour them." ‡ One of the results of Lord Chatham's encouragement of these histrionic performances was the production by the future Minister of a tragedy in five acts, entitled "Laurentius, King of Clarinium," the manuscript of which is still preserved at Earl Stanhope's seat at Chevening. Lord Macaulay has defined it as "bad of course," but not worse than the tragedies of Hayley.§

Fortunately, the great statesman found his son an apt pupil. At the University of Cambridge, where he was entered at Pembroke Hall at the age of fourteen, young Pitt became a model of industry and exemplary conduct. According to his tutor, Bishop Tomline, though he was cheerful and even playful in his intercourse with those whose society he preferred, he "steadily avoided every species of irregularity." ‖ As an undergraduate, he regu-

* MS. Original. † *Ibid.* ‡ Chatham Correspondence, vol. iv. p. 240.
§ Biographies, p. 140. Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 5.
‖ Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. i. pp. 7, 8.

larly dined in the public hall; never failed, unless prevented by illness, attending chapel morning and evening, and, on no single occasion, ever spent an evening out of the College walls. Probably no undergraduate in the University devoted himself more closely to study. He obtained a profound knowledge of the ancient languages of Greece and Rome; the orations of antiquity were his constant and favourite reading; Newton's Principia seem to have been more agreeable to him than a novel of Fielding's; mathematics are said to have been almost his passion.*

Very different had been the youth and education of Charles James Fox. His father Lord Holland, witty and social himself, appears to have spoiled, almost as much as he idolized, his sprightly and intelligent offspring. The little, indeed, which we know of Fox's childhood is almost entirely derived from his father's letters. He was scarcely more than three years old when we find Lord Holland postponing some important business for the purpose of enjoying a *tête à tête* dinner with his engaging child. On the following day, he writes to Lady Holland that he grows "immoderately fond" of Charles; and again, four years afterwards, he writes—Charles is "all life, motion, and good humour." † Lord Holland, like Lord Chatham, encouraged dramatic representations in his family. On one

* Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. i. pp. 9—18. Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. pp. 14, &c. Macaulay's Biographies, pp. 143—4.

† Mrs. George Anne Bellamy in her "Apology for her Life," relates the following anecdote in reference to Lord Holland's indulgence of his favourite child;—"The wall at the bottom of the lawn before Holland House being to be taken down, and iron palisades put up in its room, that the passengers on the road might have a better view of that fine antique building, it was necessary to make use of gunpowder to precipitate the work. Mr. Fox had promised Master Charles that he should be present when the explosion took place. But finding the workmen had completed the fall of the wall without giving him notice, he ordered it to be rebuilt; and when it was thoroughly cemented, had it blown up again, in order to keep his word with his son. He at the same time recommended it to those about him, never, on any account, to be guilty of a breach of promise to children, as by doing so they instilled into them an indifference with regard to the observance of their own promises, when they arrived at years of maturity."—"*Apology*," vol. ii. p. 188.

occasion, indeed, we find him expressing an apprehension that Charles is "stage-mad," an apprehension, however, which he qualifies with the consolatory reflection that "it makes him read a good deal." "Charles is dreadfully passionate," one day complained Lady Holland to her husband; "what shall we do with him?"—"Never mind!" was the reply of the easy father; "he is a very sensible little fellow, and will learn to cure himself." Fox himself, in after times, used to relate this anecdote, with a not uninstructive comment. "I will not deny," he said, "that I was a very sensible little boy; a very clever little boy; and what I heard made an impression on me, and was of use to me afterwards." The stately Chatham would scarcely have forgiven forwardness in one of his children, yet Lord Holland saw in it no drawback to parental partiality. "I found Charles," he writes in one of his letters, "very well, very pert, and very argumentative." At a later period he writes to Lady Holland — "*Is Charles my sensible child still?*" *

At the age of nine years, Fox was transferred from a private school at Wandsworth to Eton, where he is said to have been assisted in his studies by the Reverend Philip Francis,† the translator of Horace, and the father of Sir Philip Francis. Had Fox been treated at Eton as other boys were treated; had he been left to fight his way in the ordinary course with his tutors and his schoolfellows,

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. pp. 5, 6.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 11. As Francis was never a master of Eton this is not very clear; unless, indeed, he may, at some time or other, have been Fox's private tutor at Eton. Francis, it seems, was introduced to Lord Holland by the beautiful and charming actress, Mrs. Bellamy, who, on the night of the signal failure of the poet's tragedy, "Constantine," at Covent Garden, in 1754, carried him home with her to meet Lord Holland at supper, in hopes that the powerful statesman might be induced to extend his protection to talent in distress. Lord Holland goodnaturedly took Francis by the hand. "Well, Doctor!" he said, "who knows but your damnation as a playwright, may be the means of your promotion as a Divine." Francis took the hint and attached himself to his new patron. —*Apology for the Life of George Anne Bellamy*, vol. ii. pp. 180—2, 187.

much mischief, as regards his future conduct and success in life, might very possibly have been prevented. But his fond and indulgent father continued to spoil him as boys in public schools are seldom spoiled. Frequently we find Lord Holland interrupting his son's studies by sending for him from Eton, and carrying him to various places of amusement. "Whenever," he writes to Lady Holland, "you think London or Holland House better for Charles than Eton, be assured I shall like it." Thus, we find him a spectator, as a boy, at the coronation of George the Third, and a listener to the debates in the House of Commons on Wilkes's famous libel, No. 45 of the "North Briton." In the witty and fashionable society of Holland House he seems at a very early age to have been regarded as a prodigy. "Commend me to your son Charles for his sagacity"—are the words of a grave statesman, the Duke of Devonshire, in one of his letters to Lord Holland. The future rival of Pitt was fourteen years of age when his father carried him to Paris and afterwards to Spa, at which latter place he is said to have supplied him with money to throw away at the gaming-table, thus encouraging in him that unfortunate passion for high play which afterwards proved the bane of his existence. On this occasion we find him absent four months from Eton, whither he returned under somewhat ignominious circumstances. "He was quizzed," we are told, "by the boys; rallied by Dr. Barnard the head-master, and actually flogged while fresh from the brilliant society he had just quitted." *

At the age of fifteen, Fox was entered at Hertford College, Oxford, where he remained about a year and a half. At the age of nineteen, he was returned for Midhurst to the Parliament which assembled on the 10th of May 1768. Much of his time during the years 1766 and 1768 was

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. pp. 10—12.

spent in France and Italy, in both of which countries his habits of dissipation and extravagance were such as would probably have broken the heart of any other father but Lord Holland. At Paris his losses at play were enormous; at Naples he is said to have contracted debts to the amount of sixteen thousand pounds. In 1770, at the age of twenty-one, we find him immersed in the high play which was then the fashion at the London Clubs; play so high that Lord Stavordale,* a youth under age, is mentioned as winning eleven thousand pounds by a single hand at hazard. "His cousin, Charles Fox," writes Walpole, "shines equally there and in the House of Commons. He was twenty-one yesterday se'night, and is already one of our best speakers." During the year 1772 we discover continued evidences of Fox's reckless extravagance and dissipation. "Lord Holland," writes Walpole in February, "has paid above twenty thousand pounds for his two sons."† His father's liberality, however, seems to have drawn forth neither gratitude
Feb. 8. nor amendment. Immediately afterwards, Gibbon, the historian, describes him as *preparing* himself for a solemn discussion in the House of Commons by spending twenty-two previous hours at the hazard table. "His devotions," writes Gibbon, "cost him only about five hundred per hour—in all, eleven thousand pounds."‡ On the 9th of April, Walpole heard him speak in the House of Commons, and heard him with admiration. "Fox's abilities," he writes to Sir Horace Mann, "are amazing at so very early a period, especially under the circumstances of such a dissolute life. He was just arrived from Newmarket, had sat up drinking all night, and had not been in bed. How such talents make one laugh at Tully's rules for an orator! His laboured orations

* Henry Thomas Strangways, afterwards second Earl of Ilchester, died 5 September 1802.

† Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 226. Last Journals, vol. i. p. 7.

‡ Gibbon's Misc. Works, p. 244. Ed. 1837.

are puerile in comparison with this boy's manly reason!" * Again, on the 22nd of June, Walpole writes to Conway—"I do not think that I can find in Patin or Plato, nay, nor in Aristotle, though he wrote about everything, a parallel case to Charles Fox. There are advertised to be sold more annuities of his and his society; to the amount of five hundred thousand pounds a year. I wonder what he will do next when he has sold the estates of all his friends." † His friend, Lord Carlisle, alone became security for him for between fifteen and sixteen thousand pounds.‡ "Lord Holland is dying;" writes Walpole on the 28th of November 1773, "is paying Charles Fox's debts, or most of them, for they amount to one hundred and thirty thousand pounds." § Again Walpole writes, on the 21st of the following month—"Charles Fox—the type, the archetype of the century—is just *relaxed* by his father from part of his debts. Lord Holland has paid an hundred thousand pounds more for him, and not above half as much remains unpaid." ‖

> "But, hark! the voice of battle shouts from far;
> The Jews and Macaronis are at war;
> The Jews prevail, and thundering from the stocks,
> They seize, they bind, they circumcise Charles Fox."
>
> *Mason's "Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers."*

Still, amidst all his difficulties, Fox's equanimity and sweetness of temper rarely forsook him. His ante-room, in which he received the Jews, he used to style his "Jerusalem Chamber." Of his elder brother Stephen, afterwards Lord Holland, who was unusually fat, he remarked that he had much the advantage of him, for he could afford to give the Shylocks pounds of flesh for their guineas.¶ On one occasion, after having lost an almost ruinous amount of money

* Walpole's Letters, vol. v. p. 381.
† *Ibid.*, p. 394.
‡ Selwyn's Corresp., vol. iii. p. 65.
§ Walpole's Letters, vol. vi. p. 21.
‖ *Ibid.*, p. 33.
¶ Walpole's Last Journals, vol. i. p. 7.

at play, Topham Beauclerk called upon him in the course of the following morning, expecting to find him in the deepest state of despondency. On the contrary, he found him complacently reading Herodotus in the original Greek. On Beauclerk expressing some surprise at finding him thus employed—"What," said Fox, "would you have a man do when he has lost his last shilling?"

Thus did this extraordinary man throw away his priceless time, and misemploy his splendid abilities! Having wasted his own means, and ruined half his friends, we find him frequently in want of a guinea to supply the exigencies of the hour. Even the waiters at the clubs are said to have become his creditors for insignificant sums, and the chairmen in St. James's Street to have been in the habit of importuning him for the payment of their paltry fares. "While," writes Walpole, "there is a broker or a gamester upon the face of the earth, Charles will not be out of debt."* His friends, on one occasion, raised a large subscription for him among themselves, when one of them happening to observe that it would require some delicacy in introducing the subject to him, and wondering how he would take it—"Take it!" interrupted Selwyn, "why, *quarterly*, to be sure." Yet, notwithstanding the difficulties in which he had involved most of his friends as well as himself, those very friends continued almost to worship him. The brilliant reputation which he had achieved for himself; his delightful powers of conversation; the amiable desire which he ever showed in society to bring out the powers of the diffident; the simplicity of his manners; the affectionate frankness of his address; his strong sense of justice; his almost feminine tenderness of heart; his superiority to all the low dirty vices of human nature, such as malice, affectation, parade, dogmatism, and deceit, atoned,

* Walpole's Letters, vol. vi. p. 21.

in the partial opinion of his friends, for a multitude of follies and errors. "To be sure," said Burke of him, "he is a man made to be loved." "It would, indeed, be very extraordinary," writes his schoolfellow and friend, Lord Carlisle, "if his heart and understanding had not seduced every one who knew him into an unjustifiable partiality." "I believe," writes the same constant friend, "there never was a person yet created who had the faculty of reasoning like him. His judgments are never wrong. His decision is formed quicker than any man's I ever conversed with, and he never seems to mistake but in his own affairs."* According to Lord Carlisle, much of Fox's dissipation was caused by his desire to bury in temporary oblivion the melancholy recollections of lost time, of squandered means, and wasted talents.

Not that we are to conclude that Fox was at all times the mere man of pleasure, nor that he was indebted to nature only, unassisted by diligence and study, for his brilliant success as an orator and a statesman. No such prodigy ever existed. His father had early impressed on his mind the value of knowledge and the necessity of application. He is said to have been a diligent scholar while at Eton, where he laid the foundation of that taste for, and thorough knowledge of, the literature of Greece and Rome, which he retained to the close of his existence. Though the study of the French language was almost entirely repudiated at Eton, we find him, at the age of fifteen, composing verses in French. "Few Englishmen," writes his nephew Lord Holland, "have ever spoken or written that language with more care and correctness." While still a boy, he had taken advantage of his visiting Italy to make himself master of the Italian language, of which he tells us that he "grew immoderately fond, particularly

* Selwyn Corresp., vol. iii. pp. 65, 23.

of the poetry." The letters, which he addressed to his friend Fitzpatrick in his youth, were written chiefly in Italian.* Pitt, on the contrary, was acquainted with no modern language but French, of which he is said to have had only a very imperfect knowledge.† At Oxford, as Fox himself tells us, he "read a great deal;" indeed, during a part of the time he remained at the University he applied himself so closely to his studies, that his tutor Dr. Newcome, afterwards Primate of Ireland, was obliged to abridge his labours. "Application like yours," he writes to him, "requires some intermission, and you are the only person with whom I have ever had connexion, to whom I could say this." Towards the close of his life, Fox used to carry about his old tutor's letter in his pocket-book; displaying it in playful triumph to his friends, when they taxed him with idleness or waste of time.‡ Like Pitt, he was "very fond of mathematics," and, in after life, used to regret that he had not more assiduously made them his study. Lord Holland, like Lord Chatham, had trained up his favourite son to figure as a public speaker, and it was apparently with this view that he encouraged private theatrical representations at Holland House. In tragedy Fox is said to have been successful, but in comedy was compelled to yield the palm to his friend, Fitzpatrick.§ "I

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. pp. 18, *note*, 29, 41.

† Macaulay's Biographies, p. 144.

‡ Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 22.

§ Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 31. While still at Eton, Fox's future success as an orator was prognosticated by his friends;—

"How will, my Fox, alone, thy strength of parts
Shake the loud Senate, animate the hearts
Of fearful statesmen! while around you stand
Both Peers and Commons listening your command!
While Tully's sense its weight to you affords,
His nervous sweetness shall adorn your words.
What praise to Pitt, to Townshend, e'er was due,
In future times, my Fox, shall wait on you."

Lord Carlisle. "*Verses on his Schoolfellows at Eton.*"

think," writes the late Mr. Allen, "I have heard Mr. Fox say, that there was no play extant, written and published before the Restoration, that he had not read attentively."*

It was certainly much to Fox's credit that, amidst all his excesses, his love of literature remained lasting and pure. Over and over again he might have exclaimed in the fine words of Lord Bolingbroke—"The love of study and a desire of knowledge I have felt all my life; but my genius, unlike the demon of Socrates, whispered so softly, that very often I heard him not in the hurry of those passions with which I was transported. Some calmer hours there were: in those I hearkened to him. Reflection had often its turn, and the love of study and the desire of knowledge have never quite abandoned me."† Dissipated as was Fox's life, there must have been many intervals which he devoted to study. To the end of his days literature was his passion. Whatever task he undertook, he aimed at excellence. He once spoke of himself, doubtless to the surprise of his hearers, as "a very pains-taking man." The fact is a remarkable one, that after he had become Secretary of State in 1782, he placed himself under a writing-master, and submitted to write out copies like a school-boy.‡

In the autumn of 1774, when Fox was in his twenty-sixth year, we find him temporarily relieved from his pecuniary embarrassments by the death of his mother, Lady Holland.§ From this period he seems to have

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 23.

† Essay on the True Use of Retirement and Study: *Bolingbroke's Works*, vol. ii. pp. 344—5.

‡ Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 30.

§ Horace Walpole, referring to the death of Lady Holland, writes to Lady Ossory on the 30th of July 1774;—"Charles Fox will be entirely cleared; have his place and £200 a year, and £10,000; a pretty beginning for a younger brother: for Julius Cæsar not a breakfast." *Walpole's Letters*, vol. vi. p. 99. Again, Walpole writes to Sir Horace Mann on the 3rd of August;—"Lady Holland is dead—just three weeks after her Lord. She has cleared all the debts of her two eldest sons. The eldest has a large fortune, and Charles a decent beginning of another, though it may

gambled away less ruinous sums than formerly, although dissipation still continued to be his bane. "Mr. Fox," writes Walpole to Sir Horace Mann on the 17th of May 1781, "is the first figure in all the places I have mentioned; the hero in Parliament, at the gaming-table, at Newmarket. Last week he passed twenty-four hours without interruption at all three, and ill the whole time."* It was these notorious irregularities, as has already been pointed out, which, on Pitt's making his appearance in public life, gave the latter so great an advantage over his elder rival. The world, in discussing their several characters and claims to public confidence, naturally drew a comparison unfavourable to Fox. They beheld in him a man of broken fortunes and ruined reputation, associating with the "most dissolute characters"† and, by his immoralities openly setting public opinion at defiance. Pitt, on the other hand, stood before them, not only himself a model of youthful purity, but attracting to his standard the sober and rising young politicians of the day, who almost worshipped him on account of his genius and his virtues. Fox, no less than Pitt, was undoubtedly actuated in his public conduct by an honourable ambition, but with Pitt ambition was an all-absorbing passion, while with Fox it was made subservient to the pursuit of pleasure. Pitt was all industry and application; while Fox, on the other hand, trusted partly to his natural abilities, and partly to the stock of knowledge which he had already stored up, to procure him victory over his opponents. Thus it was, then, that Pitt raised himself to a power which he succeeded in retaining for seventeen years, while Fox, during the whole of his political career, held

not last a night." *Ibid.*, p. 101. Lady Holland survived her husband only twenty-three days, and on the 26th of December following died their eldest son, Stephen Fox, who, six months previously, had succeeded his father as second Lord Holland. By his death Charles Fox succeeded to the tenure of the lucrative place of Clerk of the Pells in Ireland. *Memorials of Fox*, vol. i. p. 136.

* Walpole's Letters, vol. viii. p. 41.

† Walpole's Last Journals, vol. ii. p. 615.

office scarcely more than as many months. George Selwyn wittily compared them to the Industrious and Idle apprentices, in Hogarth's prints.* "Charles," said his friend Boothby, at a later period, "has three passions—women, play, and politics. Yet he never formed a creditable connexion with a woman in his life; he has squandered all his means at the gaming-table; and, with the exception of eleven months, he has invariably been in Opposition."

* Walpole' Letters, vol. viii. p. 351.

CHAPTER XLII.

Abrupt withdrawal of Earl Temple from the Pitt Administration—Instance of Pitt's disinterestedness—Difficulties of the New Ministry—Frequent defeats of the Government in the House of Commons—The Commons petition for Pitt's removal—The King in favour of a Dissolution of Parliament—The Cabinet, under Pitt's guidance, decide against Dissolution—Violent party attacks on the King by Fox and other ex-Ministers—The King's health again impaired—The House of Lords censure the proceedings of the Commons—Decline of Fox's influence—Numerous addresses of Sympathy sent to the King—Enthusiastic reception of Pitt in the City—Brutal attack on Pitt in passing Brooks's Club—Dissolution of Parliament—Fox nearly ousted for Westminster—Majority for Government in the House of Commons—Splendid position of Pitt—Letters of the King to Viscount Howe and General Conway.

PITT had been scarcely forty-eight hours in office when a blow was dealt him from an unexpected quarter, which threatened to prove fatal to his infant Administration. On the 19th of December, Earl Temple had accepted the Seals as Secretary of State. On the 21st he suddenly resigned them. "I lose no time," writes Fox to Lord Northington, "in sending you the intelligence, because it may prevent measures you would otherwise be taking. The confusion of the enemy is beyond all description, and the triumph of our friends proportionable."* The defection of so near a relative, and of so powerful an ally, as Lord Temple, was to Pitt a source of the deepest distress and mortification. When, early on the following morning Bishop Tomline visited him and was admitted to his bedside, he was told by him that he had passed the night without enjoying a moment's sleep. "This," says the Bishop, "was the only

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 224.

event of a public nature, which I ever knew disturb Mr. Pitt's rest while he continued in good health."*

Lord Temple's precipitate resignation of the Seals, at so critical a period, appears to have been pretty generally attributed by his contemporaries to a difference of opinion between him and Pitt on the policy of dissolving Parliament.† Temple advocated immediate Dissolution. Pitt was resolutely bent on delay. Other causes, however—such as disgust at having been refused a step in the Peerage as a recognition of his recent services in Ireland—disappointment at not having been placed at the head of the Treasury ‡—and possibly jealousy of his cousin, Pitt—may not improbably have, more or less, had their share in influencing the conduct of this impracticable and imperious grandee. That he both aspired to a dukedom, and imagined that his claims had been unduly overlooked, there is ample evidence to show. For instance, on the formation of the Coalition Ministry, we find him preferring formal complaints of neglect both to the Duke of Portland and Lord North, nor, indeed, had the Earl allowed Pitt to remain many hours Prime Minister, before he commenced importuning him for some "mark of the King's approbation of his conduct," and treating his having been passed over as a "personal offence." Pitt, it seems, would willingly have compromised the matter by advising the King to confer a peerage on the Earl's second son, but this was indignantly rejected by his testy kinsman.§ Possibly, too, it may not have been without

* Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 233.

† Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 608. Cornwallis Papers, vol. i. p. 163.

‡ That Temple was encouraged by his friends to aspire to the Premiership, and also that both Fox and Lord North considered his elevation to that high post, a very probable event, is certain. See *Buckingham Papers*, vol. i. pp. 169, 251, and *Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox*, vol. ii. p. 114.

§ Buckingham Papers, vol. i. pp. 242, 250, 292. See also *Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt*, vol. i. pp. 163—4. If it be the case that personal pique and disappointment were the occasions of Lord Temple's resigning the Seals, he had at least a precedent in the

feelings of irritation, if not envy, that Temple beheld the splendid advancement of a subaltern relative, who was not only his junior in years, but so infinitely his inferior in rank and aristocratic consequence. Temple never seems to have loved, and not improbably may have disliked, his illustrious cousin. There had certainly been a time, when the favour and countenance of the powerful lord of Stow might have been of service to the young law-student entering upon life, but the rays of kindness had apparently never flowed to Pitt from that quarter. It was not, indeed, till his genius was rapidly bearing him to the highest point of political greatness, that he seems, for the first time, to have been a guest at the classical seat of his powerful kinsman. To his mother, Lady Chatham, he writes on the 22nd of July, 1783—"My excursion to Stow was a very short one; the pleasantest, however, that could be. I found more beauties in the place than I expected; and the house, though not half finished in the inside, the most magnificent by far that I ever saw. Still, as far as the mere pleasure of seeing goes, I had rather be the visitor than the owner."*

We have seen how great was Pitt's distress at the resignation of Lord Temple, yet it has been questioned whether the defection of that nobleman was not, after all, the occasion of strength, rather than of weakness, to the Administration. In the opinion of the public, it had been with no very clean hands that the Earl had emerged from the underground operations by which he had succeeded in undermining the Coalition Ministry, and consequently his continuance in office might, by entailing a certain amount of odium on the new Administration, have occasioned considerable embarrassment to Pitt. Whatever may have been

example of his uncle, Richard Earl Temple, who, a quarter of a century previously, had flung up the office of Privy Seal on the Garter having been withheld from him by the Duke of Newcastle. *Chatham Correspondence*, vol. i. pp. 438, 439, and *note*; *Walpole's Letters*, vol. iii. p. 264.

* Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 127.

the motives, however, which influenced the conduct of Lord Temple at this time, Pitt, at least, was very soon afforded an opportunity of proving how disinterested were his own considerations. He had been only a few days in power, when the death of Sir Edward Walpole placed at his disposal the sinecure appointment of Clerk of the Pells, to which was attached a salary of three thousand a year.* Every one expected that he would have appropriated the place to himself. Certainly, the public would not have blamed him had he done so, nor probably would even the bitterest of his political opponents have impugned his conduct in Parliament. Lord North, for instance, though far from having been a rapacious Minister, had made no scruple of bestowing similar fortunate windfalls upon his own relations; nor could Fox well have called his rival to account, considering that he himself enjoyed the like lucrative post of Clerk of the Pells in Ireland. Moreover Pitt had the strongest personal motives for appropriating to himself the vacant office. By doing so, he would have secured for himself that which Gibbon, in his "Memoirs," styles "the first of earthly blessings, Independence,"† whereas, situated as he now was, a single hostile vote in Parliament might at any moment re-consign him to his old chambers in Lincoln's Inn, to his slender income of three hundred a year, and the precarious profits of the Western Circuit. Despite, however, the advice and remonstrances of his friends, he not only resisted the temptation, but by handing over the appointment and its emoluments to Colonel Barré, relieved the country from the expense of the scandalous

* Such is the amount of salary as represented by Lord Stanhope (*Life of Pitt*, vol. i. p. 177) and by Lord Macaulay (*Biographies*, p. 171) but the net salary and emoluments must have reached a much larger sum. By a Return which was presented to the House of Commons on the 11th of February 1782, it appears that the clear and actual receipts were no less than £7597 12*s.* 0½*d.*—*Annual Register for* 1786, p. 185. There were probably, however, very considerable expenses to be paid out of this sum. See *ante*, p. 421, note *.

† Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works, p. 91. Ed. 1837.

pension which had been granted to the latter by the Rockingham Administration. Disinterestedness so uncommon was doubtless sneered at by the wits and dandies of Brooks's, but he had his reward in the applause and confidence of his fellow-subjects. "Sir," said Barré to Bishop Tomline, "it is the act of a man who stands upon a high eminence in the eyes of that country which he is determined to govern."* Pitt's conduct in rejecting the Clerkship of the Pells was also highly extolled by Thurlow in the House of Lords. That post, he said, "I was shabby enough to advise him to accept, and certainly should, under his circumstances, have been shabby enough myself to have accepted." †

The difficulties, with which Pitt at the outset of his Administration found himself beset, were such as would probably have induced any other Minister to retire in despair from the helm of Government. To his great mortification, his father's former colleague, the Duke of Grafton, declined the post of Privy Seal, while a far more intimate associate of his father, Lord Camden, refused the Presidency of the Council. In the House of Commons, the votes of the united parties of Fox and Lord North considerably outnumbered his own. He had to contend—and to contend almost alone—not only against men of eloquence, wit, and tried administrative abilities, such as Burke, North, and Sheridan, but against the transcendent genius of Fox, a statesman who, to adopt the words of Gibbon, "had proved himself in the conduct of a party equal to the conduct of an empire." ‡ On the very first day on which Pitt appeared in the House of Commons after his re-election for Appleby, he had the mortification to find himself defeated on five successive motions, and left in two minorities of 39 and 54. He had

* Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 254.
† Parl. Hist., vol. xxiv. col. 515.
‡ Gibbon's Misc. Works, p. 93. Ed. 1837.

expected no mercy from his political opponents, and he met with none. They scarcely allowed him even breathing time. They affected to regard him in the light of a conceited, inexperienced boy, and ridiculed his prospects of establishing himself in power as an "unparalleled delusion." Day after day, he found himself exposed to a pitiless storm of sarcasm, threats, and invective. Altogether, between the 17th of December 1783 and the 8th of March, 1784, the Opposition triumphed in the House of Commons on sixteen occasions. Even to Pitt himself, so hopeless at one time appeared to be his chances of ultimate success, that it was only in obedience to the earnest entreaties of his Sovereign that he was induced to prolong the struggle. "If you resign, Mr. Pitt," the King is reported to have said to him, "I must resign too" * By his friends also, as well as by his enemies, the game would seem to have been regarded as desperate "Depend upon it," said Gibbon, "Billy's painted galley must soon sink under Charles's black collier." † Fox himself wrote to Lord Northington, who was still discharging the duties of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, "not to quit his house nor dismiss a single servant." ‡ Dec. 26.

Still Pitt continued gallantly to struggle on, and, in due time, with improved prospects of success. More than once the House of Commons went to the length of petitioning the King to dismiss him from his councils, but to no purpose. Throughout the memorable contest he displayed not only abilities of the highest order, but a prudence, a courage, a self-command, and a presence of mind, which

* Dutens' Memoirs of a Traveller now in Retirement, vol. v. p. 116.

† Butler's Reminiscences, p. 161.

‡ Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 225. "Mr. Pitt's late checks," writes Walpole on the 5th of December, "may be of use to him, and teach him to appreciate his strength better, or to wait till it is confirmed. Had he listed under Mr. Fox, who loved and courted him, he would not only have discovered modesty, but have been more likely to succeed him, than by commencing his competitor." *Walpole's Letters*, vol viii. p. 439.

secured for him almost universal admiration. To the support of his Sovereign, to the good sense of the nation, and to his own personal resources, he began to look up for the means of eventually achieving the triumph which his efforts and his patriotism so richly deserved.

It was the opinion of Lord Thurlow, as well as that of Lord Temple, that Pitt should at once have appealed to the sense and suffrages of the people by dissolving Parliament. Of the same opinion was the King. "I own," he writes to Pitt on the 24th of January, "I cannot see the reason, if the thing is practicable, that a Dissolution should not be effected: if not I fear the Constitution of this country cannot subsist." * Pitt, on the other hand, was convinced that the longer the public were allowed time for reflection, the more inclined they would be to declare in favour of Prerogative, and against the pretensions of the Coalition. The King, however, as will be seen, continued to differ with him on the subject:—

The King to Mr. Pitt.

[Extract.]

"*January* 24, 1784, 6.25, P.M.

"I desire Mr. Pitt will assemble the confidential Ministers this evening, that he may state what has passed this day. I should think he cannot give any reason for preventing a Dissolution on Monday; but, if he should, he must be armed with the opinion of the other Ministers." †

Fortunately Pitt gained his point in the Cabinet; the final result subsequently proving how wise had been his judgment.

In the mean time, the late Ministers had scarcely received their dismissal, before they revived their former personal attacks upon the King; thus incensing him, more than ever, against what he styles "a desperate faction," which, in his

* Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. iv. Appendix. † *Ibid.*

opinion and to use his own words, threatened "to complete the ruin of the most perfect of all human formations, the British Constitution." * Well indeed may the King have been provoked, when we find Lord Surrey carrying, by a large majority in the House of Commons, a motion in which the King was, almost directly, charged, with having permitted "his sacred name to be unconstitutionally used in order to affect the deliberations of Parliament." † But, as might be anticipated, it was Fox whose language was the boldest and the most calculated to give offence to his Sovereign. He was still in office; still Secretary of State; still speaking in front of the Treasury Benches, when, on the 17th of December, he vented a tirade against the King, which was not the less insulting that it was guardedly couched in language of pretended deference and respect. He not only represented him as being surrounded by a set of mercenary Janissaries, who, at the bidding of their master, were prepared to strangle, not indeed men, but measures; but, indirectly drawing a parallel between him and the Emperor Tiberius, he likened the royal document, which had been Lord Temple's authority for canvassing the Lords against the India Bill, to the perfidious rescript which that Emperor had sent to the Roman senate, inciting them to dispatch Sejanus without a trial, and without requiring evidence of his guilt. ‡

——"quo cecidit sub crimine? quisnam
Delator? quibus indiciis? quo teste probavit?
Nil horum: verbosa et grandis epistola venit
A Capreis—bene habet; nil plus interrogo."

Juvenal, Sat. x. v. 69—72.

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* Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. vi. Appendix.

† Parl. Hist., vol. xxiv. cols. 305—317.

‡ Fox's Speeches, vol. ii. pp. 266, &c. Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. iii. pp. 598, 599.

Such continued provocations, on the part of Fox and his friends, could scarcely fail to augment the distress with which the King hourly contemplated the probability of his being compelled to receive them back as his Ministers. To Pitt he writes on the 13th of January—"I am ready to take any step that may be proposed to oppose this faction, and to struggle to the last period of my life; but I can never submit to throw myself into its power. If they in the end, succeed, my line is a clear one, to which I have fortitude enough to submit."* Again the King writes to Pitt on the 15th of February—"Mr. Pitt is so well apprized of the mortification I feel at any possibility of ever again seeing the heads of Opposition in public employments—and more particularly Mr. Fox, whose conduct has not been more marked against my station in the Empire, than against my person — that he [Mr. Pitt] must attribute my want of perspicuity, in my conversation last night, to that foundation."† To the King, the present doubtful contest between Pitt and Fox was tantamount, in interest and importance, to a struggle between life and death. Again the King's health gave way; again his accustomed cheerfulness forsook him; again he more than hinted his intentions, in the event of defeat, of abandoning England for his Hanoverian dominions.‡ During the stay of the Court at Windsor, it had become his custom—accompanied only by a single equerry, with whom he rarely exchanged a word, and followed by a single servant—to take long rides into the country, during which he appeared to be immersed in the most painful reflections. Generally speaking, before concluding his ride, he paid a visit either to his hounds, or to one of his farms, but evidently his former favourite pursuits had ceased to afford him gratification. When he returned to the Queen's

* Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. iv. Appendix.
† *Ibid.*, p. vi. ‡ *Ibid.*

apartments, it was remarked by those who loved him that his countenance wore the same anxious melancholy which it had worn when he had taken leave of his family in the morning. According to General Budé—"The first five or six years he knew him [the King] he thought he never saw such a temper. He was always cheerful; never for a moment discomposed or out of humour. But the American war, in some degree, altered his temper, from his extreme anxiety and disappointment on that head. The Coalition, and having a Ministry forced on him which he detested, hurt him also." According to the further authority of General Budé, the disposition of George the Third "was naturally of the most feeling and anxious kind," and consequently he was the more readily susceptible of great excitement. *

In the mean time, notwithstanding Fox's powerful influence in the Lower House of Parliament, and the formidable majorities which he was able to command, it had become more and more evident that the prevailing opinions and principles of the House of Commons were neither those of the King, of the House of Peers, nor of the Public in general. At length, the difference of opinion between the Lords and Commons seemed likely to be brought to an issue by a motion, of which the Earl of Effingham had given notice in the Upper House, to the effect that the House of Commons, in certain of their late Resolutions, had infringed the spirit of the Constitution. By the King the result of the impending debate in the Upper House was naturally looked forward to with the deepest interest.

* Quarterly Review, vol. cv. p. 475. General Budé was sub-governor to Prince William, afterwards Duke of Clarence, and to Prince Edward, afterwards Duke of Kent. "I do not quite know,' writes Madame D'Arblay, "what to say of General Budé, except that his person is tall and showy, and his manner and appearance are fashionable, but he has a sneer in his smile that looks sarcastic, and a distance in his manner that seems haughty." *Diary and Letters*, vol. iii. p. 40. The general died in the Upper Lodge, Windsor Castle, October 30, 1818, at the age of eighty-two. See the *Gentleman's Magazine for* 1818, Part 2, pp. 571—2.

The King to Mr. Pitt.

"*February* 4, 1784.

"I trust the House of Lords will this day feel that the hour has come for which the wisdom of our ancestors established that respectable corps in the State, to prevent either the Crown or the Commons from encroaching on the rights of the other. Indeed, should not the Lords stand boldly forth, this Constitution must soon be changed; for if the only two remaining privileges of the Crown are infringed—that of negativing Bills which have passed both Houses of Parliament, and that of naming the Ministers to be employed—I cannot but feel, as far as regards my person, that I can be no longer of any utility to this country, nor can with honour continue in this island." *

To the King's great satisfaction, Lord Effingham's motion was triumphantly carried by a majority of one hundred votes to fifty-three. "My present situation," writes the King to Pitt on the 15th, "is perhaps the most singular that ever occurred, either in the annals of this or any other country; for the House of Lords, by not a less majority than two to one, have declared in my favour, and my subjects at large, in a much more considerable proportion, are not less decided."† And it was the voice of his "subjects at large" which eventually pronounced judgment between the King and Charles Fox. The middle classes of society, weary of the selfish policy and insolent pretensions of the Coalition, were fully prepared to resent the recent attacks upon the royal prerogative. They had taught themselves to regard Fox's India Bill as a shameful attempt to set up an arrogant Oligarchy at the expense of the Crown, while, on the other hand, they saw in the virtues of Pitt, in his disinterestedness, in his unflinching fortitude and firmness, in his genius and eloquence, the germs of a pure, wise, and lasting Administration. Fox, indeed, had no greater enemy, nor worse adviser, than himself. In the first place, by his unnatural coalition with the

* Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. vi. Appendix. † *Ibid.*, p. vii.

Tory party, he had placed a ladder at the feet of Pitt, which enabled his younger rival to mount to a height of power more despotic and more durable than any British Minister had achieved since the fall of Sir Robert Walpole; and, in the next place, by his treatment of the King, he had invested George the Third with a popularity for which he had long sighed in vain, and which, at this particular period, he scarcely seems to have merited. Unquestionably, the share which the King had had in stifling Fox's India Bill had been, to say the least of it, an undignified, if not an unconstitutional proceeding; while still more reprehensible was the preference which he publicly showed for Pitt's Administration over that of Fox and the Duke of Portland, by allowing Pitt to confer no fewer than four Baronies,* whereas he had refused to the Whigs the disposal of even a single coronet. The precedents, which he thus created, were not the less pregnant with future danger to the Constitution, because he had the plea of having received great provocation, or because his conduct subsequently met with the approval of a majority of his subjects.

At all events, Fox had, for the present at least, entirely forfeited all his former boasted popularity; so much so that, at a public meeting at Westminster, the "Friend of the people" was actually hissed and groaned at by his own constituents.† If, said Governor Johnstone in the House of Commons, there were to be an election for King, he would give his vote in favour of Mr. Fox, but, on the other hand, he wished to preserve the Constitution from the danger with which it was menaced by his India Bill.‡ Still stronger was

* On the 5th of January 1784, Thomas Pitt was created Baron Camelford, of Boconnock in Cornwall; on the 30th of the same month Edward Eliot was created Baron Eliot of St. Germans; while, almost at the same time, Henry Lord Carteret was preferred from an Irish to an English Barony, and the Barony of Lovaine of Alnwick conferred on the Duke of Northumberland, to descend to his second son.

† Parl. Hist., vol. xxiv. col. 664. ‡ *Ibid.*, vol. xxiv. col. 594.

the language of Fox's colleague for the representation of Westminster, Sir Cecil Wray. "I cannot," he said, "consistently with my duty or my principles, contribute by my vote to replace in a Cabinet the very individuals who, by their late daring invasion of the rights and properties of their fellow-subjects, have been so justly dismissed by his Majesty, and some of whom ought to have been brought to the block." It was manifest to him, added Sir Cecil, that "the voice of the House of Commons was no longer the voice of the people of England." * It had been Fox's boast, while still a Minister of the Crown, that he owed his situation, not to the favour of his Sovereign but to the People, and, accordingly, now that it was the People who called upon him to resign his tribuneship, great indeed must have been his mortification. From all parts of the Kingdom, Addresses reached the King thanking him for having dismissed his late unprincipled advisers.† "We, your faithful citizens," runs the Address of the City of London, "lately beheld with infinite concern the progress of a measure, which equally tended to encroach on the rights of your Majesty's Crown, to annihilate the chartered rights of the East India Company, and to raise a new power unknown to this free Government, and highly inimical to its safety. As this dangerous measure was warmly supported by your Majesty's late Ministers, we heartily rejoice in their dismission, and humbly thank your Majesty for exerting your prerogative in a manner so salutary and constitutional."‡ Even the borough of Banbury, for which Lord North sat in the House of Commons, sent up an Address to the King thanking him for the dismissal of their representative.

Neither was the new favour, with which the King was

* Wraxall's Hist. Memoirs, vol. iii. pp. 738, 739. Parl. Hist., vol. xxiv. col 455.

† See especially the London Gazettes of 24th, 27th, and 31st January; and 3rd, 10th, and 24th February, 1784.

‡ Belsham's Memoirs of George 3, vol. iii. pp. 351—2.

regarded, confined to the friends of Prerogative and to the Middle Classes. Men, whose opinions had long been diametrically opposed to those of the Court, were now to be found amongst its champions. Lord Mahon, an eccentric lord who would apparently have been a leveller had he not been born a noble, arrayed himself on the side of his youthful brother-in-law. Lord Mountmorres, whose conduct during the riots of 1769 is said to have bordered on high treason,* became an enthusiast in the cause of Pitt. Mason the poet, lately one of the most zealous promoters of the formidable York Parliamentary Reform Association, "plunged," in the words of his friend Walpole, "into the most preposterous support of prerogative." It was the duty of every Englishman, he proclaimed, to fly to the aid of his Sovereign.† The Duke of Richmond, the advocate of universal suffrage—the Earl of Effingham, who had been a most active opponent of the Government, and Earl Harcourt, whose boast it used to be that he never appeared at Court but he wore a ring bearing a republican symbol‡ were now among the loudest to declaim against Fox and his party, as the enemies of the Constitution. Even Wilkes turned courtier, and figured at the King's levees at St. James's.

* See *ante*, vol. i. p. 445, and *note*.

† The conduct of Mason on this occasion dissolved an intimacy between himself and Walpole which had lasted for twenty years, and which was destined not to be revived till twelve years afterwards, when both of these gifted men were near the verge of the grave. See *Walpole's Letters*, vol. iv. p. 156, *note*, and vol. viii. p. 455, *note*, 459, *note*.

‡ The seal-ring in question bore the cap of liberty between two daggers. Walpole tells us that, on Lord Harcourt turning courtier, he presented the ring to "Lady Jersey's little boy."—"Lord Harcourt," writes Walpole, "had been so obnoxious to the Court that when his mother lately died, the Queen did not send a message to the Countess to say that she would call on her, though this be always done in etiquette to a Countess, and as constantly refused: in consequence Lord and Lady Harcourt never went near the Court." See *Walpole's Letters*, vol. viii. pp. 455—7, and *note*, and *Walpoliana*, pp. 81—3; Edition by Sharpe. Six months after Lord Harcourt's being reconciled to the Court, (7 August 1784,) his Countess was appointed a Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Charlotte, in the room of the Duchess of Argyle.

In the mean time, notwithstanding the abuse and ridicule, which, in and out of Parliament, were levelled at Pitt, his popularity more than kept pace with that of the King. In the same degree that his contest with the Coalition grew more and more exciting, the public grew more and more enthusiastic in his cause. To Colonel Ross, for instance Lord Cornwallis writes, February 17, 1784—"The mass of the people are certainly with the present Ministry"; and again his Lordship writes on the 23rd—"Pitt rises every day in character and estimation as to abilities, and he positively declared on Friday night, in one of the best speeches that ever was made, that he would not resign. I have not dined with, or seen in private, the great personage, [the Prince of Wales,] you inquire about; nor, I believe, does any one who votes as I do. In short there is not a more violent Foxite than him in the kingdom."* Among other evidences of the high estimation in which Pitt was held by his fellow-countrymen, the Corporation of the city of London, under the most flattering circumstances, thanked him for his public services, and voted him its freedom in a gold box. On the 28th of February a deputation from the City waited upon him at the residence of his brother, the Earl of Chatham, in Berkeley Square, and, after having presented him with his new honours, attended him to the Hall of the Grocers' Company, from whom he had accepted an invitation to a magnificent banquet. Since the days when Sir Philip Sydney had been made free of the Company, no guest more illustrious had enjoyed its hospitality. In the present modern hall, full-length portraits of Pitt and George the Third continue to recall the days of their great popularity in 1784. The person selected by the Company to welcome the youthful Minister was the once redoubtable demagogue, Wilkes. Pitt's progress into the City resembled a triumph.

* Correspondence of Charles, first Marquis Cornwallis, vol. i. pp. 160, 161.

On his return, also, at night, many of the tradesmen in Fleet Street and the Strand illuminated their houses, while a large multitude of people—filling the air with their cheers and huzzas—followed the coach in which he sat with his brother, Lord Chatham, and his brother in law, Lord Mahon. All went on quietly till they reached St. James's Street, when suddenly it was communicated to the discomfited politicians at Brooks's Club, that the populace had removed the horses from the Minister's coach and were about to drag him past their windows in triumph. A serious, and apparently premeditated, breach of the peace was the result. Just as the Premier's equipage, still drawn by the multitude, was passing Brooks's, a sudden and furious onslaught was made upon it by a body of ruffians, armed with bludgeons and the broken poles of sedan-chairs. Rumour even whispered that among the assailants were more than one aristocratic member of the Club, who quitted the faro-table for the purpose of taking a part in this dastardly attack. In the mean time, the doors of the carriage had been forced open by the hired bullies, and several blows aimed at Pitt, which were fortunately warded off by Lord Chatham. The life of the Minister, indeed, seems to have been, for some seconds, in considerable danger, nor was it till after a severe contest that he and his two relatives were enabled to effect their escape into White's Club. Of the three, Lord Mahon seems to have found the greatest difficulty in extricating himself;—

> "Ah! why Mahon's disastrous fate record?
> Alas! how fear can change the fiercest lord!
> See the sad sequel of the Grocers' treat;
> Behold him dashing up St. James's Street!
> Pelted and scared by Brooks's hellish sprites,
> And vainly fluttering round the door of White's."
>
> *Political Eclogues.*

Whether Fox, as was much suspected by his contem-

poraries, bore a part in the assault on his rival, is a question which we have not the means of deciding. When a friend, however, taxed him with it, he not only emphatically denied the truth of the charge, but pleaded in proof of his entire innocence that he was in bed at the time with his mistress, Mrs. Armstead, afterwards Mrs. Fox, who was prepared to substantiate the fact upon oath. "Fox's vindication of himself," said Selwyn, "reminds me of the favourite defence of the rogues at the bar of the Old Bailey, who first of all plead an *alibi*, and then produce their concubines as their witnesses." *

The King to Mr. Pitt.

"*February* 29, 1784.

"I was much hurt at hearing since the Drawing Room of the outrage committed the last night under the auspices of Brooks's against Mr. Pitt on his return from the City, but am very happy to find he escaped without injury. I trust every means will be employed to find out the abettors of this, [*sic orig.*] which I should hope may be got at. As I suppose tomorrow will be a late day at the House of Commons, and consequently that I cannot be wanted on Tuesday, I mean tomorrow after Court to go to Windsor for the sake of hunting that day.

"G. R." †

The great contest between Pitt and Fox was now drawing rapidly, and, as far as Pitt was concerned, triumphantly to an end. There existed, indeed, an apprehension on the part of the King and his Minister, that Fox would cut off the supplies, but Lord Mahon judged otherwise, and judged rightly. "At Pitt's," writes Wilberforce, "we had a long

* Grose's "Olio," p. 190.—Walpole, speaking of the famous Election for Westminster which took place only a few weeks after the attack upon Pitt's person, incidentally mentions the "Irish chairmen being retained by Mr. Fox's party;" adding, in a note, that "almost all the hackney-chairmen in London were Irish." *Letters*, vol. viii. p. 469.

† Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol i. p. ix. Appendix.

discussion; and I remember well the great penetration showed by Lord Mahon. 'What am I to do,' said Pitt, 'if they stop the supplies?' — 'They will not stop them,' said Mahon: 'it is the very thing which they will not venture to do.'" * Pitt's path now lay clear before him. The wisdom and foresight which he had displayed in resisting the King's earnest appeal to him to dissolve Parliament, had gradually produced the results which he had anticipated. By degrees, the "virtuous and respectable majority" of the Coalition—as Fox thought proper to style it†—grew smaller and smaller, till, on a grand debate on the 8th of March, the numbers were reduced to ONE. By this time the Mutiny Bill had been passed and the supplies voted. With the ready concurrence, therefore, of his Ministers, the King resolved to take the sense of the nation, and accordingly, on the 25th, the Parliament was dissolved. No victory could be more complete than that which Pitt had achieved. In a Parliament of Lord North's own calling and filled with his friends and followers, he had not only succeeded in defeating him, but he had also defeated Fox and his splendid phalanx of eloquence and talent. He had fought them with their own weapons, and vanquished them upon their own battle-field. "I shall ever," writes the King Mar. 9. to his young Minister, "with pleasure consider that by the prudence, as well as rectitude, of *one* person in the House of Commons, this great change has been effected; and that he will be ever able to reflect with satisfaction, that in having supported me he has saved the Constitution—the most perfect of human formations." ‡

The result of the General Election answered the King's most sanguine expectations. The Dissenters voted against their old allies the Whigs, and even the Yorkshire Asso-

* Life of Wilberforce by his Sons, vol. i. p. 49.

† Fox's Speeches, vol. ii. p. 388.

‡ Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. x, Appendix.

ciation declared against the Coalition. In quarters where the Court had the least right to expect success—in counties where the estates of the Whigs were the most princely and where their influence had long been paramount—the Opposition found themselves signally defeated. The great Commoner, Mr. Coke, lost his election for Norfolk. Lord John Cavendish lost his election for the city of York. Sir Charles Bunbury was defeated in Suffolk. George Byng was thrown out in Middlesex, and Sir George Savile was unable to bring in his nephew and heir for the county of York. That important county, notwithstanding the vast counter influence of the Cavendishes, the Fitzwilliams, and the Howards, returned as its representatives, Duncombe, the son of a banker, and Wilberforce, the son of a merchant of Hull. Fox's friend, Thomas Grenville, was defeated in Buckinghamshire. Both the late Members for the University of Cambridge—Mansfield, who had been Solicitor General under the late Administration, and the Honourable John Townshend, late a Lord of the Admiralty—failed to obtain their re-election. General Conway was defeated at Bury, and Erskine was unable to procure a seat in any quarter. "Plenty of bad news from all quarters;" writes Fox, "but I think that I feel misfortunes, when they come thick, have the effect rather of rousing my spirits than sinking them."* As late as the twenty-third day of the Westminster Election, Fox not only stood far below Lord Hood on the poll, but having fewer votes even than his unpopular opponent, Sir Cecil Wray, would in all probability have lost his election but for the open partisanship of the Prince of Wales, and the active canvass and persuasive fascinations of the beautiful Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire.† "Westminster goes on well," writes Pitt to

Apr. 3.

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 267.

† Daughter of John first Earl Spencer. In 1774, at the age of seventeen, she became the wife of William fifth Duke of Devonshire. The exertions which the Duchess made to secure the return of Fox for Westminster are well known. "Mr.

Wilberforce, "in spite of the Duchess of Devonshire, and the other *women of the people.*" * Pitt himself was returned at the head of the poll for the University of Cambridge with Lord Euston for his colleague. "I cannot refrain," writes the King to him on the 5th of April, "from the pleasure of expressing to Mr. Pitt how much his success at Cambridge has made me rejoice, as he is the highest on the return, and that Lord Euston is his colleague. This renders his election for the University a real honour, and reconciles me to his having declined Bath." †

One of the most remarkable features of the great Electioneering contest of 1784 was the fact of the ex-demagogue Wilkes being returned as the Ministerial candidate for the county of Middlesex. Pitt, as we have seen, had been the constant and sincere advocate of Parliamentary Reform, and accordingly it was upon this score that Wilkes was enabled to press upon the Freeholders of the county the expediency of extending all their support to the "virtuous young Minister" whose liberal and enlightened principles

Fox," writes Walpole on the 13th of April, "has all the popularity in Westminster; and, indeed, is so amiable and winning that, could he have stood in person all over England, I question whether he would not have carried the Parliament. The beldams hate him; but most of the pretty women in London are indefatigable in making interest for him; the Duchess of Devonshire in particular. I am ashamed to say how coarsely she has been received by some worse than tars. But me nothing has shocked so much as what I heard this morning. At Dover they roasted a poor *fox* alive by the most diabolical allegory,—a savage meanness that an Iroquois could not have committed!" *Walpole's Letters*, vol. viii. p. 469. During her canvass, the Duchess made no scruple of visiting the abodes of the humblest of the electors, dazzling and enchanting them by the fascination of her manner, the power of her beauty and the influence of her high rank, and sometimes carrying off to the hustings the meanest mechanic in her own carriage. "The Duchess of Devonshire," writes Lord Cornwallis on the 19th of April, "is indefatigable in her canvass for Fox. She was in the most blackguard houses in Long Acre by eight o'clock this morning." *Cornwallis Correspondence*, vol. 1, p. 166. The fact of the Duchess having purchased the vote of an impracticable butcher by a kiss, is said to be unquestionable. It was on one of these occasions that the well known compliment is said to have been made her by an Irish mechanic—"*I could light my pipe at your eyes.*" The Duchess died in March 1806, at the age of forty-nine. Of Fox's own canvass for Westminster, some amusing particulars will be found in *Grose's "Olio,"* pp. 202—3.

* Life of Wilberforce, vol. ii. p. 63.

† Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. xii. Appendix.

promised to advance the best interests of the country.* At the close of the different elections, it was computed that of Fox's former followers no fewer than one hundred and sixty had failed to obtain seats in the new Parliament. It was the fashion of the time to speak of them as "Fox's Martyrs."

The new Parliament met on the 18th of May, ten days before Pitt had completed his twenty-fifth year. Whatever political errors or shortcomings he may have been guilty of in the course of his later career, he had, at this period at least, achieved for himself a reputation perhaps the most brilliant in Europe. According to Walpole, his struggle with Fox excited no less interest at Amsterdam and Versailles than in the precincts of St. James's.† "He became," writes Lord Macaulay, "the greatest master of the whole art of Parliamentary government that has ever existed; a greater than Montague or Walpole; a greater than his father Chatham or his rival Fox; a greater than either of his illustrious successors, Canning and Peel."‡ "You know," writes Lord Carteret to General Grant, "that I am not partial to Pitt; and yet I must own that he is infinitely superior to anything I ever saw in the House, and I declare that Fox and Sheridan, and all of them put together, are nothing to him. He, without support or assistance, answers them all with ease to himself, and they are just chaff before the wind to him." §

Deep as was the interest which George the Third had taken in the late exciting condition of politics, it had occasioned no interruption, as will be seen by the following letters,‖ in the interest which he ever took in public business and the public welfare. Lord Howe, whose letter opens the correspondence, was at this time First Lord of the Admiralty.

* Wilkes's Address to the Middlesex Electors, *Ann. Reg.* for 1784—5, p. 276.

† Letters, vol. viii. p. 472. ‡ Biographies, p. 174.

§ Cornwallis Papers, vol. i. p. 291.

‖ The letters from George the Third to Lord Howe, which will from time to time be introduced into these pages, are printed, except where otherwise indicated, from copies which were furnished to the Right Hon. J. W. Croker from the original letters in possession of his lordship by the late Marquis of Sligo.

Viscount Howe to the King.

"ADMIRALTY OFFICE, *Feb.* 4, 1783, $\frac{45}{m}$ p. 3, P.M.

"Lord Howe has the honour to submit to His Majesty's perusal the papers received this morning by express from Admiral Sir Thomas Pye, relative to a claim made in the name of the Irish Volunteers embarked in the ships of war under orders for the East Indies.

"This claim is consonant to the terms upon which the Irish Volunteers were entered to serve in the Fleet; and though Lord Howe sees no cause for uneasiness on this subject, he humbly submits to His Majesty's consideration, the propriety of his [Lord Howe] going to Portsmouth tomorrow morning, in his character of Commander in Chief of the Channel Fleet, and, by directions from the Admiralty, to see, with the concurrence of Sir Thomas Pye * that proper attention is had to the just representations of the claimants, and that due order is preserved in the Division of the Fleet at that Port.

"If the weather is favourable for Lord Howe to go off to Spithead on the day after he arrives at Portsmouth, he trusts he shall be able to return to town on Friday. He understands that General Conway has taken all the necessary steps with relation to the circumstances stated in Sir Thomas Pye's letter concerning the conduct of the 83rd Regiment.

"The limitation for the time of service referred to, in the claim beforementioned, is expressed in a proclamation and not in an act of Parliament." †

The King to Earl Howe.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *Feb. 4th*, 1783, $\frac{m}{10}$ pt. 4, P.M.

"The idea of going tomorrow to Portsmouth, to see that proper attention is had to the just representations of the Irish Volunteers is very becoming of Lord Howe's character, and cannot but be the most efficacious means of keeping the Fleet at Spithead in good order; and I should imagine that he will be able by the end

* Admiral Sir Thomas Pye, at this time Commander in Chief at Portsmouth. He died on the 23rd of February, 1785.

† MS. original.

of the week to return; but the present is so much the more pressing business, that it certainly calls most essentially for his attention.

"G. R."*

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *March 23rd*, 1783, 10.50, P.M.

"Lord Howe,

"I desire you will come here immediately.

"G. R."

The King to General Conway.†

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *Feb. 28th*, 1783, $\frac{m}{4}$ p^t 5, P.M.

"After the discontents that have arisen among the soldiers on the subject of the East Indies, it is rather extraordinary that any neglect should not have been prevented by having sufficient money at Portsmouth for paying those who are going on that service.

"The Royal Lancashire Volunteers being on their march home, I suppose Gen. Conway will as soon as possible let the North Yorkshire Volunteers also begin their march into the North, which will probably end any present mistake as to their situation.

"Sir George Yonge ‡ came, I suppose, too late to St. James's this day, and has therefore sent me Gen. Conway's letter, but neither the Returns nor the List of Recommendations.§ I desire

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* MS. original.

† General Conway held the appointment of Commander in Chief of the Forces from March 1782, till the dismissal of the Coalition Ministry in December 1783.

‡ The Right Hon. Sir George Yonge, Bart., at this time Secretary at War, and afterwards successively Master of the Mint and Governor General of the Cape of Good Hope.

§ This passage affords further pleasing evidence of the interest which George the Third personally took in the claims of deserving military officers. (See *ante* p. 220.) "An instance happened this year, [1781,] which showed the attention the King always paid to the services and rewards of the army. Lord Amherst, then Commander in Chief, carried him a packet of military commissions to be signed; and the King, first looking over the List, observed one appointed Captain over an old Lieutenant. 'He cannot purchase'; said his lordship. But something in the name struck the King, and before he signed the Commissions, he turned to one of many large folios, *which are all in his own hand-writing*, and presently finding the name of the Officer, with some memorandum of his private life very much to his credit, he immediately ordered him to be promoted to the vacant company." *Court and Family of George 3*, vol. ii. p. 3.

General Conway will send for them from the Secretary at War, and enclose them to me.

"G. R."*

The King to Viscount Howe.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *6th April*, 1783.

"It seems rather difficult to understand Sir E. Hughes'† accounts of his engagements, but it appears as if he is contented with the behaviour of the Officers and men under his command, and that the French have on all these occasions retired; but I fear the honour that has been gained does not compensate for the defects occasioned to the general state of that Fleet. Lord Howe's knowledge must make him a much better judge than I can pretend to be, and therefore I will not say more.

"G. R."‡

The King to Viscount Howe.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *March 31st*, 1784.

"On coming to town this day, I found the box containing the letter from Sir John Lindsay,§ and the several despatches from Vice Admiral Gambier.‖

"Lord Howe's idea of conveying in a frigate the crew and passengers that Captain Affleck¶ has luckily saved, is very proper, and the availing himself of the opportunity of getting certain intelligence of the present state of the Port of Cherbourg.

"G. R."**

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* Egert. MS. 982. f. 39, British Museum.

† Vice Admiral Sir Edward Hughes was at this time Commander in Chief in the East Indies, where he fought five sanguinary engagements with the French. He died an Admiral of the Blue on the 19th of February 1794.

‡ MS. original.

§ Admiral Sir John Lindsay, K.B., at this time Commander in Chief in the Mediterranean, died on the 4th of June 1788. He was knighted for his gallant conduct at the siege of Havannah.

‖ Vice Admiral Sir James Gambier, at this time Commander in Chief on the Jamaica Station, died a Vice Admiral of the Red, on the 8th of January 1789.

¶ Captain Philip Affleck, at this time Captain of the "Triumph," guard-ship, at Portsmouth, and afterwards a Lord of the Admiralty. He died an Admiral of the White on the 19th of November 1789. When in command of the "Triumph" he fought several severe and gallant actions.

** MS. original.

The King to Viscount Howe.

"WINDSOR, *April 19th*, 1784, $\frac{m}{45}$ pt. 7, P.M.

"The loss of the 'Superbe' is an unpleasant event, though I suppose she was so very much worn-out, that if she had returned she must have been broken up. I am sorry to find the East India Company continue the war, which, if not put a stop to, must bring that whole part of the globe into a fresh combustion.

"G. R." *

The King to Viscount Howe.

"WINDSOR, *Jan*^{y}. 9, 1785, $\frac{m}{10}$ past 10, A.M.

"The despatches from Sir John Lindsay shew that the Barbary States, as formerly, are *inconvenient friends;* and I fear, if some new mode of treating them cannot be devised, will hourly become worse.

"Sir Charles Douglas,† I am sorry to say, keeps his former vivacity of temper, which makes him perhaps deem, what does not exactly suit his ideas, as marks of neglect from his *superiors*, and impertinence from his *inferiors*.

"G. R." ‡

* MS. original.

† Sir Charles Douglas, Bart., at this time Commander in Chief on the Nova Scotia Station, died in February 1789. He was Captain of the Fleet in Rodney's great action, having been previously created a Baronet for his services in relieving the city of Quebec in 1776.

‡ MS. original.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Improvement in the King's health and spirits after the defeat of the Coalition—His domestic life—Mrs. Delany's sketches of the habits and amusements of the Royal Family—Juvenile Ball at Buckingham House—Mrs. Siddons's Dramatic Readings at Court—Estrangement between the King and the Prince of Wales—Dissolute conduct and extravagant habits of the Prince—The Prince's passion for Mrs. Fitzherbert—Mrs. Fitzherbert withdraws to the Continent—She returns to England, and is married to the Prince—The marriage kept secret—Fox, in the House of Commons, denies, on the authority of the Prince, that any marriage ceremony had taken place—The Prince's conduct on the occasion—Considerate conduct of the King and Queen towards Mrs. Fitzherbert.

By means of the strong and wise Government which the King and his young Whig Minister, Mr. Pitt, had conjointly succeeded in establishing, he was enabled, for some years to come, to enjoy an exemption from that party warfare, and those political distresses, which had so long checquered his existence—distresses no doubt attributable in part to a defective education, and to the seclusion in which the earlier years of his life had been passed, but still more so to the ambition and inordinate demands of those who neither understood his true character, nor appreciated his many estimable personal qualities. By his indomitable courage and perseverance—or, as his enemies would designate it, by his dogged obstinacy—he had effectually overcome that great Whig Oligarchy which had domineered over his grandfather and great-grandfather, and was consequently permitted for a season to repose on his hardly earned laurels.

The King's victory over the Coalition was no sooner completed, than we find him resuming his former natural

cheerfulness of manner, and again taking an interest in the innocent and dignified enjoyments of life. Again we find him amusing himself with superintending his improvements at Windsor and Kew; again mixing and familiarly conversing with the humblest of his subjects; delighting himself with relieving human distress or adding to human happiness, and, above all things, taking a father's pride in, and enjoying the society of his young and beautiful family. Once more we find Mrs. Siddons enchanting the royal circle, either at Buckingham House or Windsor, with her readings from Shakespeare and other dramatic writers.* In the month of May, 1785, the famous musical festivals, in commemoration of Handel, afforded him opportunities alike of patronizing and of enjoying, in all its grandeur, the art of which he was most passionately fond. At one time we find him escorting the Queen and her fair daughters from Windsor
Aug. 29. 1785. to Egham Races, and, after having enjoyed a cold collation with them on the crowded course, riding familiarly among his subjects, gaily conversing, at one moment, with his *cicerone*, the Duke of Queensberry, or with the Clerk of the Course, and at another moment winning the heart of the Lady Mayoress by checking his horse as he passed her carriage, and addressing to her a few words of flattering courtesy. Not many weeks afterwards we find him a guest with the Queen at Lord Harcourt's seat at Nuneham, and, on the
Oct. 12. following day, visiting the colleges at Oxford, attending divine service in Christ Church cathedral, and quitting that ancient and classical city amidst the ringing of many bells, succeeded by a brilliant illumination.

From the pen of Mrs. Delany, we continue to glean many interesting sketches of George the Third as he appeared in his social hours and domestic circle. We can

* George the Third was not only a great admirer of Mrs. Siddons' genius but entertained for her personally great respect and esteem. *Campbell's Life of Mrs. Siddons*, vol. ii. p. 129.

see him riding over from Windsor to Bulstrode Park, attended only by a single equerry, and making amends for his invasion of the venerable Duchess of Portland's breakfast-parlour, by his unaffected affability and good-nature. Sometimes he went attended by the Queen and the Princesses, with a gay company in their train. "Last Thursday, the 2nd of October" [1783] writes Mrs. Delany, "a little before twelve o'clock, word was brought that the Royal Family were coming up the Park; and, immediately after, two coaches and six, with the King on horseback and a great retinue, came up to the hall door. The company were the King and Queen, Princess Royal, Princess Augusta, Princess Elizabeth, Princess Mary, and Princess Sophia—a lovely group all dressed in white muslin polonoises, white chip hats with white feathers, except the Queen, who had on a black hat and cloak; the King dressed in his Windsor uniform of blue and gold; the Queen, attended by the Duchess of Ancaster, who is mistress of the robes, and Lady Elizabeth Waldegrave who attends the two eldest Princesses, and Mrs. Goldsworthy, who is sub-governess to the three younger Princesses. The King had no attendance but the equerries, Major Digby and Major Price. They were in the drawing-room before I was sent for, where I found the King and Queen and Duchess of Portland seated at a table in the middle of the room. The King, with his usual graciousness, came up to me, and brought me forward."

Nor was this the only courtesy shown on the occasion to the interesting old lady. The King and Queen had each brought a gift for her; the latter presenting her with a frame, on a new principle, for weaving fringe, and the former with "a gold knotting shuffle." A few days afterwards, the Duchess and Mrs. Delany returned the royal visit. "There were two chairs," writes the latter, "brought in by order of their majesties for the Duchess of Portland and myself to sit on, which were easier than those belonging to

the room. We were seated near the door that opened into the concert-room. The King directed them to play Handel's and Geminiani's music, which he was graciously pleased to say was to gratify me. These are flattering honours. I should not indulge so much upon this subject, but that I depend upon your considering it proceeding more from gratitude than vanity. The three eldest princesses came into the room in about half an hour after we were seated. All the Royal Family were dressed in a uniform for the *demi-saison* of a violet-blue armozine, with gauze aprons. The Queen had the addition of a great many fine pearls. When the concert of music was over, the young Princess Amelia, nine weeks old, was sent for, and brought in by her nurse and attendants. The King took her in his arms, and presented her to the Duchess of Portland and to me. Your affectionate heart would have been delighted with this royal domestic scene; an example worthy of imitation by all ranks, and, indeed, adding dignity to their high station." *

Two more court-pictures of the period—the one from the pen of the literary and fashionable Mrs. Boscawen, describing a "juvenile dance" given by the Queen at Buckingham House, and the other by Mrs. Delany containing a sketch of Mrs. Siddons delivering her recitations in the royal circle—have each their individual interest. "Last night," writes Mrs. Boscawen to Hannah More, "there was a *bal royal* at the Queen's House; in one room for children which was begun by the Princess Mary and *my* Princess Elizabeth: in the saloon, for grown gentlemen and ladies, viz., three princesses, four princes, and *l'élite de la noblesse* of both sexes. *His Majesty minded only the little ones*, whom he ranged and matched, and was quite delighted with their performance; requiring the Queen to come and see how

* Mrs. Delany's Letters to Mrs. Frances Hamilton pp. 31—35. Life and Correspondence of Mrs. Delany, edited by Lady Llanover, vol. iii. pp. 148—150.

well they danced. Her Majesty sat on a sofa between the Duchesses of Beaufort and Marlborough. The King took a world of care of his little people; charged them not to drink anything cold, and showed them where they might always find tea, &c., &c. They supped very *properly* and departed about one. The King, still guarding them, told the mothers to call for their cloaks, and to wrap them up well before they went down. The other ball and fine supper continued till the sun had been up some time. The Prince of Wales was there, *et en prince et en bon fils.*"*

It was in one of the apartments which witnessed these gay festivities, that Mrs. Delany listened to the charming powers of Mrs. Siddons. "Their Majesties," she writes, "sat in the middle of the first row, with the Princesses on each hand, which filled it. The rest of the ladies were seated in the row behind them, and as there was a space between that and the wall, the lords and gentlemen that were admitted stood there. Mrs. Siddons read standing, and had a desk with candles before her. She behaved with great propriety and read two acts of the 'Provoked Husband,' † which was abridged by leaving out Sir Francis and Lady Wronghead's parts, &c. But she introduced John Moody's account of the journey, and read it admirably. The part of Lord and Lady Townly's reconciliation she worked up finely, and made it very affecting. She also read Queen Katharine's last speech in King Henry the Eighth. She was allowed three pauses to go into the next room and refresh herself, for half an hour each time. After she was dismissed, their majesties detained the company some time, to talk over what had passed, which was not the least agreeable part of the entertainment. I was so

* Memoirs of Hannah More, vol. i. p. 371.

† The comedy of the "Provoked Husband" was commenced by Sir John Vanbrugh and completed at his death by Colley Cibber. It was first acted at Drury Lane in 1728.

flattered by their most kind reception of me, that I really did not feel the fatigue, notwithstanding I believe it was past twelve before we made our last courtesy." *

Only one serious domestic distress, at this period, ruffled the otherwise even tenor of the King's existence. Unhappily no amendment had taken place in the conduct of his first-born, the Prince of Wales. Habitual dissipation, extravagance, and disobedience, on the part of the son, had led to a confirmed coldness and contempt on the part of the father. It has been said that the King behaved with undue harshness towards the Prince; that he was prone to exaggerate, rather than to extenuate, his faults, and that he made no allowances either for the thoughtlessness and susceptibilities of youth, or for the peculiar temptations by which the Prince was unquestionably surrounded. That there may have been some truth in these allegations is not impossible; but, on the other hand, let it be remembered that, in addition to the distress which the Prince's private immoralities had occasioned his father, he had also, by his political conduct, given him great and bitter provocation. A Prince of Wales, as Lord Malmesbury told his Royal Highness, ought to be of no party. "You are to be governed, Sir," he said, "in your high station, by considerations very different from those which are to regulate the conduct of a simple individual."† Yet, notwithstanding this excellent advice we have seen the Prince not only figuring as a political partisan before he was twenty-one, but, in the season of the King's great affliction and embarrassment, throwing all his weight into the scale, in opposition to his father's Government. We have seen him the intimate associate of men whose political principles and private vices were equally obnoxious to the King; the centre of a frivo-

* Letters to Mrs. Frances Hamilton, pp. 45—6. Life and Corresp. of Mrs. Delany, vol. iii. p. 255, 2nd Series.

† Lord Malmesbury's Diaries and Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 75.

lous circle in which every kind of profligacy was practised, and in which the Sovereign was the favourite subject of ribald jocularity. Moreover, had the Prince limited his profligacy to the pursuit of wild frolic and illicit love, the King, like other fathers, might have found excuses for his son, and have trusted to time to remedy the evil. But the Prince's dissoluteness, as has been already intimated, was of no ordinary description. His libertinism at this time was scarcely the libertinism of a gentleman. At one and twenty, he had become the prey of money lenders and sharpers, the associate of pugilists and jockeys. A regard for truth was certainly not among the better qualities for which his contemporaries may have given him credit.

Among the minor offences of the Prince which were a source of distress to the King, was his reckless extravagance. It has been mentioned, that, on his coming of age, the King had granted him an income of £50,000 a year, and that Parliament had voted him £60,000 to pay his debts and provide his outfit, yet before he was three and twenty, we find him admitting that he owed £160,000.* In the distress, to which his folly had reduced him, he sought the advice of Lord Malmesbury, with whom he had two remarkable interviews at Carlton House, of both of which the accomplished diplomatist has bequeathed us an account. The first interview took place on the 27th of April. The Prince on this occasion described himself as on the verge of ruin. The King, he said, had desired him to send in an *exact* statement of his debts, and this he had done to the best of his ability. There was one large item, however, of £25,000, respecting which he said he felt himself bound in honour not to give any information, and consequently the negotiation had been broken off. If it were a debt, argued the King, which his son was ashamed to explain, it was one which he, as a father, ought not to defray.

* Lord Malmesbury's Diaries, vol. ii. pp. 68—9.

It was the Prince's own wish, as he told Lord Malmesbury, to retrench by travelling on "a plan of economy" but the King had refused his consent to his going abroad. The King, he added, had plainly told him that, unless he married, he should oppose any appeal being made to Parliament to assist him; at the same time volunteering his parental advice to him to lay by £10,000 a year for the payment of his debts, by which means he would be enabled to remain in England. But how, enquired the Prince, can I do this, "at a time when, *with the strictest economy, my expenses are twice my income?*" He saw no means of relief, he said, but by living abroad, whether with or without the King's consent. "What *am* I to do"? he exclaimed. "Am I to be refused the right of every individual? Cannot I travel legally, as a private man, without the King's consent?" In vain Lord Malmesbury endeavoured to dissuade him from taking so undutiful and so suicidal a step. "I am ruined," retorted the Prince, "if I stay in England; I shall disgrace myself as a man." His father, he insisted, hated him. He had hated him, he said, since he had been seven years old. In vain Lord Malmesbury strove to dispel so cruel an impression from his mind. So far, he argued, from the King hating him, he was satisfied that no event could give greater happiness to his Majesty and to the Queen, than to be able to restore him to their affections. It would prove alike the greatest blessing to the nation and the greatest comfort to the Royal Family. "It may be so," replied the Prince, "but it cannot be. We are too wide asunder ever to meet. The King has deceived me. He has made me deceive others. I cannot trust him, and he will not believe me."*

The second conference between the dissolute young Prince and Lord Malmesbury took place at Carlton House

* Lord Malmesbury's Diaries and Correspondence, vol. ii. pp. 67—72.

on the 23rd of May. By this time, the Prince, for some reason or other, had abandoned his ill-advised intention of going abroad, while Lord Malmesbury, on his part, came armed, semi-officially, with a proposal on the part of Mr. Pitt, to the effect that, provided the Prince would relinquish that design, and, at the same time, consent to be reconciled to his father and to appropriate a portion of his means towards the liquidation of his debts, Ministers would offer no opposition to an application being made to Parliament to increase his income. This liberal offer, however, instead of affording gratification to the Prince, as Lord Malmesbury had anticipated, was met, on his part, by an instant and scornful rejection. It was useless, he said. The King would never consent to an appeal being made to Parliament. He doubted whether Pitt could ever carry such a measure through the House of Lords. He dare not even mention the subject to the King. The King would turn him out of office at the bare allusion to such a proposition. Twice the Prince repeated his former assertion that his father *hated* him, and would never be reconciled to him. "Besides," he added, "I cannot abandon Charles and my friends!" Fortunately Lord Malmesbury's visit and propositions were made with the full knowledge of Fox and the Duke of Portland, and consequently, on this point at least, the Prince's arguments were easily refuted. On another point, however, the Prince seems to have somewhat staggered Lord Malmesbury. "If you will not credit me," he said, "you will perhaps credit the King himself." He then opened an escritoire, and taking from it a correspondence which had recently passed between him and the King, handed the letters to Lord Malmesbury. "The Prince's letters," writes the latter, "were full of respect and deference, written with great plainness of style and simplicity. Those of the King were also well written, but harsh and severe; constantly refusing every request the

Prince made, and reprobating, in each of them, his extravagance and dissipated manner of living. They were void of every expression of parental kindness or affection, and, after both hearing them read, and perusing them myself, I was compelled to subscribe to the Prince's opinion, and to confess there was little appearance of making any impression on His Majesty in favour of His Royal Highness." Whatever may have been the contents of those letters, the Prince more than hinted a design of publishing them in order that the public might judge between him and his father. This most improper intention, however, was at once, and very energetically, opposed by Lord Malmesbury. "It is not sufficient, Sir," he said, "for the King to be wrong on *one* point, unless you are in the right in *all*." So long, he added, as any part of the Prince's conduct remained open to censure, the public voice would assuredly decide with the King.*

However harsh may have been the King's language in the course of his correspondence with his son, there is at least this to be said in his favour, that he and Lord Malmesbury put very different constructions upon the spirit of the Prince's letters. Moreover, it would almost seem, by the following communication, that instead of his having bigotedly turned a deaf ear to his son's solicitations, he was ready to place the settlement of the business in the hands of Pitt and the Lord Chancellor:—

The King to Mr. Pitt.

"*March* 24, 1785.

"This morning I received the enclosed note from Lord Southampton,† on which I appointed him to be at St. James's, when I returned from the House of Peers. He there delivered to

* Diaries and Correspondence, vol. ii. pp. 73—6.

† Charles Fitzroy, first Baron Southampton, and a General in the Army. He had formerly been Groom of the Bedchamber to the King, and on the 27th of December, 1780, was appointed Groom of the Stole to the Prince of Wales. He died 21 March, 1797.

me the letter from the Prince of Wales. All I could collect further from him was, that the idea is that I call for explanations and retrenchments as a mode of declining engaging to pay the debts; —that there are many sums that it cannot be honourable to explain; that Lord Southampton has reason to believe they have not been incurred for political purposes; that he thinks the going abroad is now finally resolved on; that perhaps the champion of the Opposition, [Fox], has been consulted on the letter now sent. I therefore once more send all that has passed to Mr. Pitt, and hope to have in the course of tomorrow from him what answer ought to be sent to this extraordinary epistle, which, *though respectful in terms, is in direct defiance of my whole correspondence.* I suppose Mr. Pitt will choose to consult the Chancellor.

"G. R." *

There were easy means, as the Prince was well aware, by which he might alike have reconciled himself to his father, and have honourably extricated himself from his difficulties. It was the earnest desire of his father, as well as of his father's subjects, that he should marry; and accordingly he had only to express a willingness to gratify that desire, and the King and the Legislature would no doubt have cheerfully consented to increase his income and liquidate his debts. As this was Lord Malmesbury's strongest argument, so was it the one which he reserved to the last, and that which proved to be the most unpalatable one to the Prince:—

"Lord M. May I suggest, Sir, the idea of your marrying? It would, I should think, be most agreeable to the King; and, I am certain, most grateful to the nation.

"The Prince (*with vehemence*). I never will marry! My resolution is taken on that subject. I have settled it with Frederick.† No! I will never marry.

"Lord M. Give me leave, Sir, to say, most respect-

* Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. xvi. Appendix.

† The Duke of York.

fully, that you cannot have really come to such a resolution. You *must* marry, Sir! You owe it to the country, to the King, to yourself.

"THE PRINCE. I owe nothing to the King. Frederick will marry, and the Crown will descend to his children; and, as for myself, I do not see how it affects me.

"LORD M. Till you are married, Sir, and have children, you have no solid hold on the affections of the people, even while you are Prince of Wales. But if you come to the throne a bachelor, and his royal highness the Duke of York is married and has sons to succeed you, your situation, when King, will be more painful than it is at this moment. Our own history furnishes strong examples of the truth of what I say.

"The Prince," continues Lord Malmesbury, "was greatly struck with this observation. He walked about the room, apparently angry. I moved towards the door, saying—'I perceive, Sir, I have said too much. You will allow me to withdraw. I am sure I shall be forgiven an hour hence.' The Prince at once relented, or affected to relent. 'You are forgiven now;' he said. 'I am angry with myself, not with you. Don't question me any more. I will think of what you have said. Adieu! God bless you!'" *

When we remember how liberal had been the terms proposed to the Prince, we may readily imagine how great was the surprise of Fox, and of the Prince's other friends, when apprized of the ill success of Lord Malmesbury's mission.† But not even Fox, intimate as he was with the heir to the throne, was aware of the true cause of that rejection, nor how little frank the Prince had been in his conferences with Lord Malmesbury. The fact is, that the Prince had fallen passionately in love with a beautiful and accomplished woman, the late Mrs. Fitzherbert, who, to his great

* Diaries and Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 77.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 78.

dissatisfaction, had made up her mind not to connect herself with him as his mistress, and who was prevented by the Royal Marriage Act from becoming his lawful wife. To this attachment, we believe, are to be traced the strong desire which the Prince had expressed to be permitted to retire to the Continent, as well as his mysterious design of allowing the Crown to lapse by default to his brother's children. Apparently Mrs. Fitzherbert would have offered no very strong opposition to his solicitations had the Prince consented to go through the marriage ceremony with her, even though, as she must have been well aware, the marriage would not have been a valid one, and their children, should she bear him any, would, to all worldly effects and purposes, have been illegitimate.* With this compromise also the Prince himself would probably have been perfectly satisfied, but for the fact that Mrs. Fitzherbert was a Roman Catholic, and by the provisions of the Act of Settlement, passed at the accession of William and Mary, a Prince of the House of Brunswick, by contracting marriage with a Roman Catholic, disqualified himself for succession to the throne. It may be argued, that the marriage being rendered null and void by the provisions of the Royal Marriage Act, the Prince was thereby relieved from the pains and penalties imposed by the Act of Settlement. The question, however, is one on which lawyers have disagreed, and consequently the Prince shrank from incurring so costly a risk, till after the failure of every other expedient.

Mary Anne Smythe, was the daughter of Walter Smythe, Esq., second son of Sir John Smythe, Baronet, of Eske, in the county of Durham, and of Acton Burnell, in Shropshire. She was born on the 26th July 1756, and at the age of nineteen became the wife of Edward Weld, Esq., of Lul-

* It was the opinion of one of the Prince's own Council, Sir Arthur Pigott, that the marriage was a valid one. See the *Times* Newspaper for 5 April 1837; and also *Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol. 2, pp. 12, 13. Ed. 1858-1860.

worth Castle, Dorsetshire, who survived their union only a few months. Her second husband was Thomas Fitzherbert, Esq., of Swinnerton, in Staffordshire, who left her for the second time a widow in 1781, before she had completed her twenty-fifth year.

Of all the attachments of George the Fourth, his passion for Mrs. Fitzherbert was alike the least disreputable and the most lasting. Neither her personal beauty nor her natural genius were of the most brilliant order; yet, according to the universal testimony of her contemporaries, her strong good sense, the sweetness of her disposition, the grace of her manners, the fascination of her address, her unaffected courtesy to all, and her active and unobtrusive benevolence, invested her with charms which it was almost impossible to resist. When the Prince became enamoured of her, in the summer of 1784, she was residing, in the enjoyment of a considerable jointure, on Richmond Hill, in Surrey; her age being at that time twenty-eight, while the Prince was only twenty-two. According to her kinsman, Lord Stourton, she was the original of the once celebrated ballad, "The Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill;"—

> "I would crowns resign to call her mine,
> Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill."*

The resistance, which Mrs. Fitzherbert offered to the Prince's suit, had not only the usual effect of increasing his passion, but impelled him to resort to a very extraordinary expedient. One day, for instance, her drawing-room in Park Lane was unexpectedly invaded by Keate, the Surgeon, accompanied by Lords Onslow and Southampton and another friend of the Prince, who, with looks of consternation, implored her instantly to repair

* Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert, by the Hon. Charles Langdale, p. 117. Respecting the questionable authorship of this famous song, and the identity of the lady celebrated in it, see *Notes and Queries*, vol. ii. p. 6, Second Series, and vol. xi. p. 207, Second Series.

with them to Carlton House. The Prince, they said, had stabbed himself. His life was in imminent danger. Nothing but her immediate presence in his sick-chamber could save his life. To visit her royal lover, unattended by one of her own sex, was of course out of the question, and accordingly she flew for aid and advice to her friend the Duchess of Devonshire in Piccadilly, who consented to be her companion to Carlton House. On the two ladies being introduced into the Prince's apartment, they found him in bed with a glass of brandy and water by his bed-side; his countenance pale, and with blood upon his person. As soon as Mrs. Fitzherbert had recovered from the emotion with which the sight had overpowered her, the Prince solemnly declared that nothing on earth should induce him to live without her; at the same time, with her reluctant permission, placing a ring upon her finger, apparently borrowed from the Duchess of Devonshire, and conjuring her to become his wife by the laws of God if not of man. Many years afterwards Lord Stourton enquired of Mrs. Fitzherbert whether she believed the blood to be really that of the Prince, or whether, in her opinion, the entire adventure was not a juggle? No, she said; the wound had left a scar which she had frequently seen. On the return of the party to Devonshire House, a deposition was drawn up of all that occurred, which was signed and sealed by every one present. The whole affair, however, was probably a mere trick. So little importance, indeed, does Mrs. Fitzherbert appear to have attached to the document, that she left it behind her at Devonshire House, where, as she told Lord Stourton many years afterwards, she thought it probable it might still be preserved. At all events, whether doubting the sincerity of her royal lover, or else alarmed at the idea of plunging into engagements which were alike unsubstantial and fraught with personal peril, she resolved to escape from the Prince's further importunities by an immediate flight to the Conti-

nent. This resolution she lost not an hour in carrying into effect, nor was it till about eighteen months had elapsed, that she returned to England.*

The young Prince was in despair at the flight of his idol. Among those to whom he poured forth his sorrows were Charles Fox and Mrs. Armstead, to whom he frequently flew for consolation at their beautiful villa, St. Ann's Hill near Chertsey. On these occasions, as Mrs. Armstead told Lord Holland, he used to weep by the hour; "testifying the sincerity and violence of his passion and his despair, by the most extravagant expressions and actions; rolling on the floor, striking his forehead, tearing his hair, falling into hysterics, and swearing that he would abandon the country, forego the Crown, sell his jewels and plate, and scrape together a competence to fly with the object of his affections to America." † In the mean time, the Prince continued to assail his absent mistress with earnest and incessant written entreaties to return to England. She promised him, indeed, that she would never become the wife of another man, but it was not till the month of December 1785, that she consented to return to England, and then on the Prince's sacred assurance that the marriage ceremony should be solemnized between them.‡

The re-appearance of Mrs. Fitzherbert in London naturally caused great alarm to such of the Prince's friends as were aware of the violence of his passion. Fox, more especially, at the risk of incurring the lasting displeasure of the heir to the throne, remonstrated with him, in the most earnest language, on the folly and madness of clinging to a passion pregnant alike with individual unhappiness, as well as with the most perilous political consequences. "The

* Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert, by the Hon. C. Langdale, pp. 118—20. Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 278.

† Lord Holland's Memoirs of the Whig Party, vol. ii. p. 126.

‡ Langdale's Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert, p. 121.

King," writes Fox to the Prince on the 10th of December, "not feeling for you as a father ought—the Duke of York professedly his favourite, and likely to be married to the King's wishes—the nation full of its old prejudices against Catholics, and justly dreading all disputes about succession; —in all these circumstances your enemies might take such advantages as I shudder to think of." From the character of Mrs. Fitzherbert, Fox makes no attempt to detract. "With respect to Mrs. Fitzherbert," he writes, "she is a person with whom I have scarcely the honour to be acquainted; but I hear from everybody that her character is irreproachable, and her manners most amiable." Yet, notwithstanding this graceful tribute to Mrs. Fitzherbert's purity, we find Fox, in a passage in his letter to the Prince part of which Lord Russell—doubtless out of a pious deference to Fox's memory —has thought it proper to omit, writing as follows—"A mock marriage, for it can be no other, is neither honourable for any of the parties, nor, with respect to your Royal Highness, even safe. This appears so clear to me, that if I were Mrs. Fitzherbert's father or brother, I would advise her not by any means to agree to it, *and to prefer any other species of connection with you, to one leading to so much misery and mischief.*" * Apparently, nothing could be more satisfactory to Fox than the Prince's reply. "My dear Charles," he wrote back, "your letter of last night afforded me more Dec. 11. true satisfaction than I can find words to express, as it is an additional proof to me, which I assure you I did not want, of your having that true regard and affection for me, which it is not only the wish but the ambition of my life to merit. Make yourself easy, my dear friend! Believe me the world will now soon be convinced, that there not only is [not], but never was, any ground for those reports, which of late have been so malevolently circulated. I have not

* Lord Holland's Memoirs of the Whig Party, vol. ii. pp. 134, 135. Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 283.

seen you since the apostasy of Eden."* Yet, as we have just seen, Mrs. Fitzherbert had not only returned to England for the express purpose of being united to the Prince, but, only ten days afterwards, the marriage ceremony was actually performed between them.

Till within a very recent period, the marriage of George the Fourth with Mrs. Fitzherbert was disbelieved and denied in more than one high quarter. The Prince himself, after he had become King, and while Mrs. Fitzherbert was living to contradict him, had the assurance to speak of "that absurd story his supposed marriage."† Yet the reality of their union is an indisputable one. After his death a perpetuation of the real facts of the case was, in the opinion of Mrs. Fitzherbert's friends, due to her reputation, and accordingly the King's executors, the late Duke of Wellington and Sir William Knighton, consented to place on record the proofs of a marriage, which their royal master had so unscrupulously denied. The espousals, it appears, were solemnized, in the drawing-room of Mrs. Fitzherbert's house in Park Lane, on the 21st of December, 1785. The ceremony was performed by a Protestant clergyman, though in part, apparently, according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church. The witnesses, besides the officiating Minister, were Mrs. Fitzherbert's brother, John Smythe, and her uncle, Henry Errington. Some time afterwards, in a season of threatened peril, Mrs. Fitzherbert, at the earnest request of the attesting witnesses, generously consented to cut off the signatures.‡ The certificate itself, however, bearing her own signature and that of the Prince—together with a letter

* Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. pp. 283—4.

† Quarterly Review, vol. xciv. p. 420.

‡ By the Royal Marriage Act, (12 Geo. 3, c. 11,) all persons, either "solemnizing, assisting, or being present," at any unauthorized marriage with a descendant of George 2, incurred the penalties of the statute of *præmunire*. *Blackstone's Commentaries*, vol. ii. p. 430. Ed. 1848.

from the latter, thanking Heaven that the witnesses were still alive to testify to the truth,—are still preserved in a place of security. *

So profoundly, for a time, was the Prince's marriage kept a secret, that, even in the pages of so well-informed a contemporary writer as Horace Walpole, we discover no allusions to it till two or three months after it had taken place, and then only in language of a doubtful and mysterious character.† By degrees, however, the affair not only became a topic of discussion in fashionable society, but, in due time, was brought under the notice of Parliament. An appeal having been made to the House of Commons to increase the Prince's income, Rolle, the influential member for Devonshire, intimated, in delicate, but sufficiently explicit language, that the question before the House involved considerations far more serious than appeared on the surface; considerations essentially affecting the interests both of Church and State. Fox was not in the House at the time, but as a future discussion

* Langdale's Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert, pp. 121, 122. By mutual agreement between Mrs. Fitzherbert and the executors of George 4, the following documents were lodged at Messrs. Coutts', the bankers;—

1. A mortgage on the Pavilion at Brighton.
2. The certificate of the marriage, dated Dec. 21st, 1785.
3. A letter signed by the Prince, relating to the marriage.
4. A will written by him.
5. A memorandum written by Mrs. Fitzherbert, attached to a letter written by the Clergyman who performed the marriage ceremony.

These documents were deposited in a box which was sealed with the seals of the Duke of Wellington and Sir William Knighton, as executors of George the Fourth, and of the Earl of Albemarle and Lord Stourton as the nominees of Mrs. Fitzherbert. At the death of Mrs. Fitzherbert a strong desire was expressed by Lord Stourton, and afterwards by his relative and representative, the Hon. Charles Langdale, to be allowed to make such use of the documents as they might think necessary for establishing, once for all, the fair fame of their kinswoman. Conscientious difficulties, however, were raised—in the first place by the Duke of Wellington, and afterwards by the Hon. and Rev. Edward Keppel, as executor of the Earl of Albemarle, and consequently the seals, it is presumed, still remain unbroken. *Langdale's Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert*, pp. 82—3, 86—7, 102—4. *Lord Holland's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 124.

† Letters to Mann dated 13 Feb. and 28 March, 1786. Walpole's Letters, vol. ix. pp. 42, 46.

was manifestly unavoidable, his absence was of no great importance. In the mean time, the self-willed Prince found himself placed in a most unenviable position. The utter ruin of his pecuniary prospects, perhaps the loss of three kingdoms, might be the consequences of acknowledging his marriage with a Roman Catholic. On the other hand, a public denial of the truth would not only blast the reputation of the woman whom he had sworn to foster and love, but, in the event of its transpiring, he would stand convicted of being guilty of a pitiful falsehood. Three days, however—from the 27th to the 30th of April—were allowed him for deliberation, and in that interval he summoned Fox to Carlton House. Whatever may have been the particulars of their conversation, Fox, when he quitted the Prince's presence, quitted it armed with the solemn word of his Royal Highness that the ceremony of marriage had never been solemnized between Mrs. Fitzherbert and himself, and accordingly he had the gratification of being able to assure a crowded, and deeply-interested, House of Commons, that not only was there no truth in the rumour of the Prince of Wales's marriage, but that it was, in fact, a "monstrous calumny."* It was a "miserable calumny," he repeated; a "low malicious falsehood" calculated only to deceive and to afford food for scandal to the vulgar. Being asked by Rolle whether he had spoken from direct authority?—"Yes," he said, he had spoken from "*direct authority.*" † Explicit, however, as was this declaration, Rolle pertinaciously refused to retract his words, and consequently there were many persons

* On the question of the Prince's private denial of his marriage to Fox, see *Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol. ii. pp. 11 &c. Ed. 1858—60. The Prince's language to Fox, said George Selwyn, reminded him of Othello's words to Iago;—

"Villain! be sure you prove my love a w——!"

Auckland Correspondence, vol. i. p. 423, *note.*

† Fox's Speeches, vol. iii. pp. 326—7.

who either believed, or affected to believe, that Fox had deliberately sacrificed his respect for truth for the purpose of shielding the heir to the throne. Within twenty-four hours, Fox was made aware of the gross deception which had been practised upon him by the Prince. On entering Brooks's he was accosted by one of the two relatives of Mrs. Fitzherbert who had signed her marriage-certificate. "Mr. Fox," said this person, "I see by the papers that you have denied the fact of the marriage of the Prince of Wales with Mrs. Fitzherbert: you have been misinformed; *I was present at that marriage.*" * Fox, it is said, was so indignant at the treatment which he had received from the Prince, that it was not till a twelvemonth had elapsed that he consented to see him again. † It was certainly to the credit of Fox, that when urged by his friends to undeceive Parliament, and thus vindicate himself in the opinion of the country, he refused to do so at the expense of ruining the reputation of the heir to the monarchy.

The Prince's next step, after having succeeded in imposing upon his friend, was to endeavour to deceive his mistress. Accordingly, meeting her, on the day after the debate in Parliament, at the house of one of her female relatives, he advanced towards her with both hands extended, and having embraced her, exclaimed—"Only conceive, Maria! what Fox did yesterday: he went down to the House and denied that you and I were man and wife." ‡ Deeply offended and distressed, Mrs. Fitzherbert, it would seem, insisted so strenuously upon a public vindication of her character, that

* Massey's Hist. of England, vol. iii. p. 324, *note.*

† *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 330. This statement no doubt is substantially correct, yet it seems scarcely reconcileable with a letter from the Prince of Wales to Fox dated the 10th of May, ten days after Mr. Fox's "denial" in the Commons, which the Prince commences by addressing him as "My dear Charles" and concludes with the words—"Adieu, my dear friend; pray excuse haste; ever yours, G. P." *Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox*, vol. ii. p. 289.

‡ Langdale's Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert, pp. 29–30.

the Prince was induced to send for Mr., afterwards Earl Grey, then a young man of two and twenty, to whom he confided the secret of his marriage,* and whom he endeavoured to enlist into his service. Lord Grey, to use his own words, found his Royal Highness "dreadfully agitated." "Charles," said the Prince, "had certainly gone too far in the debate of the preceding night." Something must be said in Parliament for Mrs. Fitzherbert's satisfaction, which might take off the effect of Fox's unqualified declaration, and, he added—"You, my dear Grey, shall explain it." That high-minded nobleman, however, naturally shrank from entangling himself in so discreditable an affair, and unhesitatingly refused to accept the commission. "Then," said the Prince, as he excitedly paced the apartment, "if nobody else will, Sheridan must."† Sheridan, accordingly, took an early opportunity of paying in the House of Commons a high-flown compliment to the private virtues of Mrs. Fitzherbert; a proceeding, however, which seems to have answered no good purpose, but merely to have left Members to form their own conclusions as they had previously done.

To the last, the Prince seems to have succeeded in persuading Mrs. Fitzherbert that Fox's denial of their marriage had been without his knowledge and consent, and accordingly her resentment towards Fox was rendered permanent.‡ To the close of the Prince's life, also, we find him vehemently insisting that there never had been any marriage *at all* between him and Mrs. Fitzherbert. Some forty years after their union, and three or four years after he ascended the throne, was published Moore's Life of Sheridan, a pas-

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol ii. p. 289. *Note by Lord Grey.*

† Lord Holland's Memoirs of the Whig Party, vol. ii. p. 139. Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 288, and note. Auckland Correspondence, vol. i. p. 423.

‡ Langdale's Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert, p. 124. Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 290. Moore's Life of Sheridan, vol. i. pp. 477—8, 2nd Edition.

sage in which work, relating to this delicate business, and, at the same time, eulogistic of Lord Grey,* appears to have given him great offence, and to have provoked from him renewed denials. Deliberately and distinctly, he told the late Mr. Croker that not only there was *not a word of truth* in the story of his interview with Lord Grey, but that "*he had never had any communication with him on the subject;*" and as for "*that absurd story of his supposed marriage,*" he disavowed it altogether.† Yet, in opposition to this startling declaration, there exists, in Lord Grey's own handwriting, not only an account of his interview with the Prince, but also the unqualified assertion of that high-minded nobleman that the King actually *confessed* to him the fact of his secret marriage.‡

To those persons who have the well-being of monarchical institutions at heart, there can be but little satisfaction in dwelling on the moral delinquencies of George the Fourth. In order, however, to explain the conduct and clear the character of the father, it becomes at times incumbent on his biographer to point out the faults of the son. There were occasions, in fact, when, in the judgment of party zeal, George the Third could do nothing right and his heir little that was wrong. In and out of Parliament, at this period, it was insisted by the Prince's political friends that he had been treated with almost systematic cruelty by his father. We have seen the Prince himself asserting that his father *hated* him; an assertion which has been seconded by the highest living Whig authority in our own time. According to Lord Brougham, "he hated him with a hatred scarcely betokening a sound mind," for which he had no better reasons than the jealousy which Princes often entertain of their successors, and his son's alliance with a political party

* Moore's Life of Sheridan, vol. i. pp. 477, 2nd Edition.

† Quarterly Review, vol. xciv. p. 420.

‡ Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 289, and note.

which the King both feared and detested.* Yet Lord Brougham, in his "Sketch" of the character of the son, has drawn a picture of the Prince, such as would almost justify any feeling, short of positive hatred, on the part of a parent towards his offspring. Even the Prince's political opposition to his father is assigned by Lord Brougham to no higher a motive than a vulgar craving for excitement.† No father and son; whose characters and conduct offered such strong contrasts to each other, could under any circumstances have associated on terms of affection and respect, nor possibly without entertaining feelings of mutual dislike. In the very case of Mrs. Fitzherbert, we discover how different were their natures, and how opposite was the view of honour which they severally took. The Prince's treatment of that lady, after he had become sated with her charms, was no more perhaps than what was to be expected from what we know of his character. His intercourse with her was, in the first instance, broken off by a passion he conceived for Lady Jersey, the mother of five children, followed by his marriage with the Princess Caroline of Brunswick. Shortly after that event, he prevailed upon her to renew her connexion with him, but again, in course of time forsook her for the waning beauties of Lady Hertford. Moreover, on the occasion of their first separation he left her without uttering a word of explanation or regret, and, on the second occasion, offered her a gratuitous insult.‡ Lastly, when he finally abandoned her, it was

* Statesmen of the Time of George 3, vol. i. pp. 10, 11. Ed. 1858—60.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 8 &c. Ed. 1858—60.

‡ Langdale's Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert, pp. 125, 132—5. Mrs. Fitzherbert, it seems, positively refused to renew her connexion with the Prince after his marriage with the Princess Caroline, unless with the sanction of the Church of Rome. "The Rev. Mr. Nassau, one of the chaplains of Warwick Street chapel," writes Lord Stourton, "was therefore selected to go to Rome and lay the case before that tribunal, upon the express understanding, that, if the answer should be favourable, she would again join the Prince; if otherwise, she was determined to abandon the country." The reply from Rome proved favourable. *Ibid.*, pp. 128—9.

not only without having made any provision for her in the event of his death, but he was actually in debt to her for sums of money which she had borrowed for him on the security of the settlements made upon her at her former marriages. Widely different was the treatment which Mrs. Fitzherbert subsequently experienced from George the Third and from other members of the royal family. Through the interest of the Queen and the Duke of York she obtained an annuity of 6000*l.*, by mortgage on the Pavilion at Brighton; but, what she probably valued far more, was the unceasing kindness which the King and Queen ever showed the wedded mistress of their son. The Queen, she told Lord Stourton, had always been her friend, and, as for the King, he could not have shown her greater affection, even had she been his own daughter.*

Mrs. Fitzherbert survived her marriage with George the Fourth fifty-one years and outlived him nearly seven years. At the time when he was near his end, in 1830, she addressed to him an affectionate letter which she found means of having conveyed to him by a friendly hand. The King, it is said, seized it with eagerness and placed it under his pillow, but, for some reason or other, it received no reply. She had some grounds, however, for flattering herself that she was not forgotten at the last. By the King's dying wish, a miniature was suspended from his neck, and as one of three portraits of her, which he possessed, was found missing after his death, she encouraged the tender belief that, though forsaken, her memory had still been dear to him, and that her image lay with him in the tomb.† Mrs. Fitzherbert expired at Brighton, on the 29th of March 1837, in the eighty-first year of her age.

* Langdale's Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert, pp. 127—8, 141, 142.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 136, 167—8, 171.

CHAPTER XLIV.

John Adams, the First Envoy from the United States of North America, received at the Court of St. James's—His interview with the King—Dr. Burney and the Handel Commemoration—George the Third as a Musical Critic—His interest in Miss Burney and her novel of "Evelina"—Death of the Dowager Duchess of Portland—Kindness of the King and Queen to Mrs. Delany—Domestic life in the Queen's Lodge at Windsor—Miss Burney's introduction to the King and Queen—She is appointed to Office about the Queen—Prince William Henry, afterwards William the Fourth, as a Naval Lieutenant—Three of the Princes entered as Students at Gottingen University—Attempt on the King's Life by Margaret Nicholson, who is confined in Bedlam—Popular feeling evoked in favour of the King.

On the 1st of June 1785, the reception-rooms at St. James's Palace witnessed the remarkable spectacle of the first presentation of an American Envoy at the British Court. The person who, on this memorable occasion, represented the infant Republic was one of its founders, John Adams, the "Colossus of Congress" as his friend Jefferson designated him, a man, notable for his crusades against kings and priests, and famous as the successor of Washington in the Presidency of the United States. To the King he is said to have been personally obnoxious; nor, when we consider the prominent part which he had taken in effecting the dismemberment of the British Empire, and his ardent advocacy of anti-monarchical principles, could his late Sovereign be expected to regard him with favour. The King, as will be perceived by the following notes, had, nearly two years previously, been urged by the Coalition Ministry to receive an American Envoy at his Court, but, at that time, without avail.

The Right Hon. Charles J. Fox to the King.

(Extract.)

"*6th August* 1783.

"Mr. Laurens was yesterday with Mr. Fox, to desire him to take your Majesty's pleasure whether it would be agreeable to your Majesty to receive a Minister from the United States. Mr. Fox, knowing your Majesty's opinion upon this subject from what your Majesty did him the honour to say to him some time since, and feeling that it cannot be an agreeable subject to dwell upon, would have taken upon himself to have answered in the affirmative, if it had not been rather pointedly put to him *to take your Majesty's royal pleasure.*" *

The King to the Right Hon. Charles J. Fox.

"WINDSOR, *August 7th*, 1783, 7 P.M.

"As to the question whether I wish to receive a Minister from America, I certainly can never express its being agreeable to me; and indeed I should think it wisest for both parties to have only agents who can settle any matters of commerce. But, so far I cannot help adding, that I shall ever have a bad opinion of any Englishman who would accept of being an accredited Minister for that revolted State, and which certainly for years cannot establish a stable government." †

Of the first, and celebrated interview between George the Third and Mr. Adams, the illustrious American has himself bequeathed us an account. On the day of presentation, he was bowed into the coach of one of the Secretaries of State, the Marquis of Carmarthen, who conducted him to St. James's Palace, where he suddenly found himself ushered into the presence of a stately assemblage of Peers, Bishops, and Ministers of State, the "focus," to use his own words, "of all eyes." His embarrassment, it seems, would have been great, but for the considerate attentions of the Swedish and Dutch Ambassadors, who, on Lord Car-

* Earl Russell's Memorials of Fox, vol. ii. p. 140.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 141.

marthen quitting him for the purpose of proceeding to the royal closet and informing the King of the Envoy's arrival, drew towards, and engaged, him in easy conversation. Presently the Marquis returned and led him into the royal presence. "I went," writes Mr. Adams, "with his Lordship through the levee-room into the King's closet. The door was shut, and I was left with his Majesty and the Secretary of State alone. I made the three reverences; one at the door, another about half-way, and the third before the presence, according to the usage established at this, and all the Northern Courts of Europe." *

The address, which the American delivered to his late Sovereign, was both judicious and graceful. It was his happy mission, he said, to convey to his Majesty the hearty and unanimous desire of the people of the United States of America, that in future there might exist the most friendly and liberal agreement between them and his Majesty's subjects; and further he was instructed by the American people to communicate to his Majesty their best wishes for his health and happiness, as well as for the health and happiness of the rest of the Royal Family. The appointment, he added, of an Envoy from the United States to the Court of Great Britain, would form an extraordinary and interesting epoch in the annals of both countries, and, accordingly, he regarded himself as peculiarly fortunate in having been preferred above his fellow-citizens, thus to stand in his diplomatic capacity in his Majesty's presence. He should think himself the happiest of men if, by his good offices, he could recommend his country to the favour of his Majesty, and in any way conduce to restore that mutual esteem, good-nature, confidence, and affection, which ought to unite people of the same language, religion and blood.†

The King, as Mr. Adams informs us, listened to him with

* Works of John Adams, vol. viii. pp. 255, 256.
† *Ibid.*, pp. 256, 257.

a close and dignified attention, not unattended by emotion. "Visible," as the American admits his own agitation to have been, the King's voice, he says, was the more tremulous of the two. "Sir," said the King, "the circumstances of this audience are so extraordinary; the language you have held is so extremely proper, and the feelings you have discovered so justly adapted to the occasion, that I must say, that I not only receive with pleasure the assurance of the friendly dispositions of the United States, but that I am very glad the choice has fallen upon you to be their Minister." The King then added words which have become memorable—"I wish you, Sir, to believe, and that it may be understood in America, that I have done nothing in the late contest but what I thought myself indispensably bound to do by the duty which I owed to my people. I will be very free with you. I WAS THE LAST TO CONSENT TO THE SEPARATION; BUT THE SEPARATION HAVING BEEN MADE, AND HAVING BECOME INEVITABLE, I HAVE ALWAYS SAID, AS I SAY NOW, THAT I WOULD BE THE FIRST TO MEET THE FRIENDSHIP OF THE UNITED STATES AS AN INDEPENDENT POWER."*

The King then changed the conversation to lighter topics. "Smiling, or rather laughing," he good-humouredly rated the American Plenipotentiary on his rumoured dislike to the French nation, which at this time was in high favour with American people. "There is an opinion among some people," said the King, "that you are not the most attached of all your countrymen to the manners of France." The remark somewhat embarrassed the American. "I must avow to your Majesty," he replied, "I have no attachment but to my own country." The King replied as quick as lightning—"An honest man will never have any other." The King then made a bow to Mr. Adams as a signal that the audience was at an end. "I retreated," he writes,

* Works of John Adams, vol. viii. p. 257.

"stepping backwards, as is the etiquette; and, making my last reverence at the door of the chamber, I went my way. The Master of the Ceremonies joined me the moment of my coming out of the King's closet, and accompanied me through the apartments down to my carriage; several stages of servants, gentlemen-porters, and under porters, roaring out like thunder as I went along, 'Mr. Adams's servants, Mr. Adams's carriage,'" &c. "The King," says Mr. Adams, "is, I really think, the most accomplished courtier in his dominions. With all the affability of Charles the Second, he has all the domestic virtues and regularity of Charles the First."* "Sir," it will be remembered, was Dr. Johnson's observation after his celebrated interview with the King—"his manners are those of as fine a gentleman as we may suppose Louis the Fourteenth or Charles the Second."†

Another eminent person, who at this time was admitted to a private audience with the King, and who has left us an account of their interview, was Dr. Charles Burney, the author of the well-known "History of Music." During the progress through the press of a Narrative, written by the Doctor, of the great Handel Commemoration, the King had taken so much interest in the work as not only to send for the proof-sheets, but to add some MS. remarks of his own.‡ The work having being completed, Dr. Burney, by his

* Works of John Adams, vol. viii. p. 358. When, in March, the following year, Jefferson was presented to the King and Queen at St. James's his reception, he informs us, was much less gracious. *Memoirs and Correspondence of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. i. p. 54.

† Croker's Boswell's Life of Johnson, p. 186, Ed. 1848.

‡ The King's MS. remarks were considered to be of so much consequence by Dr. Burney, that he cancelled the two sheets to which those remarks had reference, and embodied the King's criticisms in preference to his own. They are as follow;—"It seems but just, as well as natural, in mentioning the 4th Hautbois Concerto, on the 4th day's performance of Handel's Commemoration, to take notice of the exquisite taste and propriety Mr. Fischer exhibited in the solo parts; which must convince his hearers that his excellence does not consist alone in performing his own composition; and that his tone perfectly filled the stupendous building where this excellent concerto was performed." The second criticism has reference to the perform-

Majesty's own appointment, was permitted to present copies to the King and Queen, in the library of Buckingham House, the same apartment in which Dr. Johnson had formerly had his celebrated interview. He found their Majesties seated together, without any attendants, and was received by them in the most frank and gracious manner. After the King had opened and examined his work—"You have made, Dr. Burney," he said, "a much more considerable book of this Commemoration than I had expected, or perhaps than you had expected yourself." The King then entered into a detailed criticism of the merits of the principal musical performers at the Commemoration; finding fault only with a single bass singer, whose notes, he said, were not only harsh, but sounded much more like the groans of a sick man suffering from a fit of the colic, than those of a person attempting harmony. "The King," writes Dr. Burney, "expressed much admiration that the full *fortes* of so vast a band, in accompanying the singers, had never been too loud, even for a single voice, when it might so naturally have been expected that the accompaniments even of the softest pianos, in such plenitude, would have been overpowering to all vocal solos. He had talked, he said, both with musical people and with philosophers upon the subject, but none of them could assign a reason, or account for so astonishing a fact." The conversation happening to turn upon Shakespeare, the Doctor mentioned a German translation of his plays by Professor Eschenburg. "The Germans translate Shakespeare!" said the King laughing; "why we don't understand him ourselves: how should

ance of the "Messiah." "Dr. Burney," wrote the King, "seems to forget the great merit of the choral fugue, 'He trusteth in God,' by asserting that the words would admit of no stroke of passion. Now the real truth is, that the words contain a manifest presumption and impertinence, which Handel has, in the most masterly manner, taken advantage of. And he was so conscious of the moral merit of that movement, that, whenever he was desired to sit down to the harpsichord, if not instantly inclined to play, he used to take this subject; which ever set his imagination at work, and made him produce wonderful *capriccios*." *Memoirs of Dr. Burney by his daughter, Madame D'Arblay*, vol. ii. pp. 385, 386.

foreigners?" The Queen remarking that she thought that the soliloquies were very well rendered by Eschenburg—"Aye," exclaimed the King, "that is because, in those serious speeches, there are none of those puns, quibbles, and peculiar idioms of Shakespeare and his times, for which there are no equivalents in other languages."* The last topic discussed was the remarkable story of the publication of the celebrated novel "Evelina," written by the Doctor's second daughter, Fanny Burney, afterwards Madame d'Arblay, a story which, though five years had elapsed since the work had first appeared in print, was still a subject of interest in literary and fashionable circles. "And is it true," eagerly inquired the King, "that you never saw 'Evelina' before it was printed?"—"Nor," replied the Doctor, "even till long after it had been published." The King then drew from the gratified father a detailed account of "Evelina's" first introduction to the world, which, as the Doctor informs us, afforded infinite amusement to the Queen, as well as to his Majesty.†

In the month of July 1785, the King's charming and venerable acquaintance Mrs. Delany had the misfortune, at the age of eighty-five, to be deprived by death of her beloved friend and daily companion, the Dowager Duchess of Portland. To Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, Hannah More writes on the occasion—"Indeed, my dear friend, I can judge by my own of the grief and surprise you must have felt at the death of the Duchess of Portland. She was of the noble and munificent style of the old nobility. She is deservedly regretted from the palace to the cottage. The poor deeply lament her, and Majesty has shed tears for her. Dear Mrs. Delany, I hear, sustains this heavy blow with the resignation which might be expected from the piety of her

* "It is impossible," writes Mr. Hallam, "to deny, that innumerable lines in Shakespeare were not more intelligible in his time, than they are at present." *Introduction to Literature of Europe*, vol. iii. p. 92, 2nd Edition.

† Memoirs of Dr. Burney, by his Daughter, vol. iii. pp. 16—20.

character, but she also feels it with a sensibility which might be calculated from the tenderness of her heart."* In the season of her bereavement, Mrs. Delany experienced, at the hands of the King, a mark of sympathy and kindness which touched her deeply, and which manifested in a very pleasing manner how great was the goodness of the King's heart. His Majesty, said the Queen to Lady Weymouth, entertained the greatest respect and affection for Mrs. Delany, and could not therefore but be apprehensive lest, at her advanced time of life and accustomed as she was to pass a great part of the year in the country, a constant residence in London might prove injurious to her health. He wished her then to take possession of a house, close to the castle at Windsor, which he proposed to place at her disposal for her life-time; and, as he was well aware of the additional expense which a second residence would entail upon her, he desired to take upon himself a part of the burden, by inducing her to accept an annuity of three hundred pounds.

The King's offer was no sooner accepted by the grateful old lady, than he commenced personally superintending the repairs of her allotted residence, which were no sooner completed than the Queen, in an autograph letter dated the third of September, invited her to take up her abode there on the Tuesday following. It was the King's express injunction, wrote the Queen, that Mrs. Delany should bring to Windsor "only herself, her niece, her clothes, and her attendants;" his Majesty and the Queen having, in the mean time, taken upon themselves to provide every article necessary either for her use or comfort. Accordingly, on her arrival, she not only found the pleased and benevolent Monarch on the spot eager to welcome her, but he had also caused the house to be stocked with plate, china, glass and linen, the cellar with

* Memoirs of Hannah More, vol. i. p. 388, 3rd Edition.

wine, and even the cupboards with sweetmeats and pickles. The garden, as Mrs. Delany herself informs us, was a "very pretty" one, and adjoined that of the Queen. The King had even had the thoughtfulness to provide her with a handsome new sedan-chair, to enable her to attend divine service in his own private chapel in the castle. Every want, indeed, had been thought of by the King and Queen, and every wish anticipated.*

On the morning after Mrs. Delany's arrival, the Queen not only sent one of the ladies of the Court to enquire after her health, but, at two o'clock, paid her a visit in person. Her Majesty was all affection and graciousness. "It is impossible for me," writes Mrs. Delany, "to do justice to her great condescension and tenderness, which were almost equal to what I had lost. She repeated, in the strongest terms, her wish, and the King's, that I should be as easy and happy as they could possibly make me; that they waived all ceremony, and desired to come to me like *friends*. The Queen delivered me a paper from the King, which contained the first quarter of £300 per annum, which his Majesty allows me out of his Privy Purse. Their Majesties have drank tea with me five times, and the Princesses three. They generally stay two hours or longer." Mrs. Delany of course became a frequent guest at the Queen's Lodge, where she was more than ever charmed with the King as she saw more and more of him in the centre of his domestic circle. "I have been several evenings," she writes on the 9th of November, "at the Queen's Lodge, with no other company but their own most lovely family. They sit round a large table, on which are books, work, pencils, and paper. The Queen has the goodness to make me sit down next to her, and delights me with her conversation, which is informing, elegant, and pleasing, beyond

* Madame D'Arblay's Diary and Letters, vol. ii. pp. 346—7, 352. Mrs. Delany's Letters to Mrs. Frances Hamilton, pp. 55—8.

description; whilst the younger part of the family are drawing and working, &c.; the beautiful babe, Princess Amelia, bearing her part in the entertainment; sometimes in one of her sisters' laps; sometimes playing with the King on the carpet, which altogether exhibits such a delightful scene as would require an Addison's pen, or a Vandyke's pencil, to do justice to. In the next room is the band of music, which plays from eight o'clock till ten. The King generally directs them what pieces of music to play, chiefly Handel's."* Such was George the Third as he constantly appeared in the society of those who loved him and whom he loved! "That the King," writes the venerable Earl of Guilford to Mrs. Delany, "has one of the best hearts in the world, I have known from his birth, and I have known the same to be in the Queen ever since I had the honour of conversing with her *out* of a drawing-room. *You*, who know them so well, will believe that it is not as King and Queen only that I love and respect them, but as two of the best persons I know in the world."†

It was in the month of December following, on the occasion of one of Miss Burney's visits to Mrs. Delany at Windsor, that she was first introduced to the King and Queen. Their Majesties, in common with the rest of the world, had been fascinated by her charming novels "Evelina" and "Cecilia," and had consequently conceived a desire to make the acquaintance of the authoress. Etiquette, it would seem, precluded her from being formally presented to them, except at a Drawing Room, but as their Majesties were in the frequent habit of calling upon Mrs. Delany without previously giving her warning, it was presumed that, sooner or later, they would be fortunate enough to surprise Miss Burney in the parlour of her venerable friend. And

* Mrs. Delany's Letters to Mrs. Frances Hamilton, pp. 58, 59, 63.

† Life and Corresp. of Mrs. Delany, by Lady Llanover, 2nd Series, vol. iii. pp. 292, 308—9.

so, shortly afterwards, it happened. One afternoon, Mrs. Delany had retired from her drawing-room in hopes of refreshing herself by her usual evening nap, leaving there her nephew, Mr. Bernard Dewes,* Miss Burney, Miss Port † a very pretty niece of Mrs. Delany, and a little daughter of Mr. Dewes. The former three were in the middle of the apartment, amusing themselves with teaching the child some Christmas games, when the door opened and the King suddenly made his appearance. "I was disentangling myself from Miss Dewes," writes Miss Burney, "to be ready to fly off if any one knocked at the street-door, when the door of the drawing-room was opened, and a large man, in deep mourning, appeared at it, entering and shutting it himself without speaking. A ghost could not more have scared me, when I discovered by its glitter on the black, a star! The general disorder had prevented his being seen except by myself, who was always on the watch, till Miss Port, turning round, exclaimed—'The King!—Aunt, the King!'" Mrs. Delany immediately made her appearance. "Every one," writes Miss Burney, "scampered out of the way; Miss Port to stand next the door; Mr. Bernard Dewes to a corner opposite to it. His little girl clung to me, and Mrs. Delany advanced to meet his Majesty, who, after quietly looking on till she saw him, approached and enquired how she did? He then spoke to Mr. Bernard, whom he had already met two or three times here." ‡

While this scene was passing, Miss Burney graphically describes herself as having been in a most alarming state of trepidation. Hoping to escape unperceived, she was in the act of gliding towards the door of the apartment, when the King, in a whisper to Mrs. Delany loud enough to be overheard by all, enquired if the young lady were not Miss

* Second son of John Dewes, Esq., of Welsbourn in Warwickshire.

† Georgina Mary Ann, daughter of John Port, Esq., of Ilam, and grand-niece of Mrs. Delany.

‡ Madame D'Arblay's Diary and Letters, vol. ii. p. 371.

Burney? Mrs. Delany answering in the affirmative, the King bowed to the terrified authoress, and then, with great good-humour in his countenance, approached and endeavoured to draw her into conversation. So overwhelming, however, was her nervousness, that, to the simple questions which the King put to her he could elicit nothing but confused and incoherent answers, and consequently he returned in despair to his former place by the side of Mrs. Delany. The conversation then turned upon the royal children; the Princess Elizabeth being at the time seriously unwell, and the younger children indisposed with whooping cough. To the best of his belief, said the King, neither he nor the Queen had ever had that complaint. At first, he added, when only two of the children had sickened with the disorder, he had thought it right to send them away in order to prevent others being infected; but now, he said, that so many had caught the complaint, there threatened to be no end of separations, and accordingly he was resolved to adopt no further similar precautions.

The King then made a second attempt to induce Miss Burney to talk. A volume of engravings, from the pictures of Claude Lorraine, happening to lie upon the table, it gave him an opportunity of asking her whether drawing was one of her accomplishments. He then turned the conversation to her novel "Evelina," putting several questions to her, as he had formerly done to her father, relative to the remarkable circumstances connected with its publication. On this occasion, Miss Burney would seem to have been somewhat more successful in entertaining the King; at least if we may judge from the fact of his more than once laughing heartily at her replies.

While the party was thus engaged, a violent knock was heard at the street-door, which was speedily followed by the Queen being ushered into the apartment. Again Miss Burney would willingly have effected her escape, but the

King having once engaged her in conversation, it would have been contrary to all etiquette to have retreated. The Queen, on perceiving the King, made him a low curtsy, at the same time expressing some surprise at finding him in Mrs. Delany's drawing-room. "Yes," he said, "I came here without speaking to any body." A small table was then placed near the Queen on which she might rest, if she felt so disposed, either her needle-work or tea-cup. A great deal of desultory talk now followed, the King and Queen taking the principal part in it with perfect good-humour, ease, and vivacity. Miss Burney was particularly charmed with their cordial and confiding behaviour towards each other; the King seeming to admire, no less than to enjoy, the conversation of his consort, while the Queen's deferential manner to her husband was, as Miss Burney thought, intended to betoken, that if she, the Queen of a powerful nation, deemed it incumbent upon her to demean herself towards him as his dutiful and devoted subject, so much greater was the amount of respect and homage due to him from others.

The visit had now lasted for a considerable time, when the King, looking at his watch, remarked that it was eight o'clock, and that if he stayed any longer he should miss saying "good-night" to his children before they retired to rest. The Queen instantly rose, and, having permitted Mrs. Delany to put on her cloak, affectionately wished her "good night." She then bowed separately to the rest of the company, whom etiquette had kept standing during the visit, and having given her hand to the King, was conducted by him to her carriage. "It is the custom," writes Miss Burney, "for everybody they speak to, to attend them out, but they would not suffer Mrs. Delany to move. Miss Port, Mr. Dewes, his little daughter, and myself, all accompanied them and saw them in their coach, and received their last gracious nods."*

* Madame D'Arblay's Diaries and Letters, vol. ii. pp. 371—391.

Miss Burney seems to have been no less fascinated by her royal mistress, than by the King. "The Queen," she writes, "is indeed a most charming woman. She appears to me full of sense and graciousness, mingled with delicacy of mind and liveliness of temper. She speaks English almost perfectly well, with great choice and copiousness of language, though now and then with foreign idiom, and frequently with a foreign accent. Her manners have an easy dignity with a most engaging simplicity, and she has all that fine high breeding which the mind, not the station, gives, of carefully avoiding to distress those who converse with her, and studiously removing the embarrassment she cannot prevent." *

When, a few months afterwards, Miss Burney was appointed to a confidential office about the Queen's person,† and was thus afforded constant opportunities of studying her Majesty's character, she found no occasion for altering her good opinion. During her daily and nightly service at the Queen's toilet, as well as on other occasions, she found her invariably "sweet and gracious." In common with the world in general, Miss Burney had given her Majesty credit for good sense, an amiable disposition, and the most exemplary conduct in the relations of private life; but, for the depth of reading and soundness of understanding, which she discovered in her royal mistress, the authoress of "Evelina" tells us that she was quite unprepared. "I had not imagined," she writes, "that, shut up in the confined limits of a Court, she could have acquired any but the most superficial knowledge of the world, and the most partial insight into character. But I find now I have only done justice to

* Madame D'Arblay's Diary and Letters, vol. ii. pp. 391—392.

† The situation held by Miss Burney was that of Second Keeper of the Robes to the Queen, to which she was appointed in July 1786. She was indebted for it, it is said, partly to her literary reputation, and partly to the friendship of Mrs. Delany. *Quarterly Review*, vol. lxx. p. 260.

her disposition, not to her parts, which are truly of that superior order that makes sagacity intuitively supply the place of experience. In the course of this month, I spent much time quite alone with her, and never once quitted her presence without fresh admiration of her talents." *

The following letters, written by George the Third about this period to Lord Howe, are acceptable as well from their bearing on the early history of the King's third son, afterwards King William the Fourth, as from their evincing the interest which his Majesty continued to take in the Naval Service.

The King to Viscount Howe.

"WINDSOR, *June 27th* 1785, $\frac{3}{4}$ p. 9, P.M.

"The Report made by Commodore Gower, of the ships he has already mustered, shews the utility of his appointment, and will probably occasion a similar inspection in time of peace, every two or three years, by some alert Officer. I am glad to find he is contented with the conduct of all his Officers. I have heard from one of his Lieutenants,† who acknowledges that the duty of his new commission sits more awkwardly on him than he should have expected, but trusts with assiduity soon to overcome it.

"G. R." ‡

The Same to the Same.

"WINDSOR, 3 *September* 1785.

"Lord Howe is desired to send the inclosed by the Post to Portsmouth. I trust he will accompany it with an *ostensible answer* to Commodore Levison, and also a private one, directing him to give full directions to Captain Thornborough how he is to conduct himself towards his *youngest Lieutenant*, and that he is to expect a very constant attendance from him on board his ship, while in any Port." §

* Madame D'Arblay's Diary and Letters, vol. iii. p. 169.

† Prince William Henry, afterwards Duke of Clarence, had been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant on the 17th of June 1785, and on the same day was appointed to the "Hebe," in which ship he was at this period serving.

‡ MS. original. § *Ibid.*

The Same to the Same.

"ST. JAMES'S, *Oct.* 20*th* 1785.

"It cannot give Lord Howe more pleasure, in having found the guardships and Marines at Plymouth in perfect order, than it does me in being able to authorize him to express to the Vice Admiral, and to the commanding Officer of the Marines, my satisfaction at so favourable a Report.

"G. R." *

The Same to the Same.

"WINDSOR, 28 *January* 1786.

"On returning from hunting at six this evening, the Queen desired to speak to me before I went to dinner. It was to communicate to me the arrival of William. I find it indispensably necessary to remove him from intercourse with the Commissioner's House at Portsmouth, and therefore desire either the "Hebe" may be removed to the Plymouth Station, or William placed on board the 32 gun frigate that is there. I merely throw out what occurs on a very unpleasant and unexpected event. The only thing I am resolved on is that he must return on Monday to his ship. I desire Lord Howe will be here between nine and ten tomorrow morning. If he cannot conveniently be here so soon, I desire he will then come by half [an] hour past twelve, when I shall be returned from Church. This will be delivered to you by Capt. Elphinstone, who *says* he had the approbation of Capt. Thornborough and Commissioner Martin for coming with William.

"G. R." †

The foregoing letter seems to require some explanation. The "Commissioner" at Portsmouth, whose residence appears to have been regarded by the King as so dangerous to his son's well-being, was Sir Henry Martin, Bart., who held that appointment from 1780 to 1789. The Baronetage shows him to have been the father of four young daughters, the charms of one of whom in all probability constituted the temptation from which the King was anxious to withdraw his susceptible son.

* MS. original. † *Ibid.*

The Same to the Same.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *March 6th* 1786, $\frac{m}{11}$ p. 5, P.M.

"I am sorry to see by the papers received at the Admiralty from Commodore Sawyer, that Captain Bentinck seems not so conversant in the necessity of obeying the orders of a superior officer as I should have hoped every one bred in the Navy must have been convinced of. I do not see how the Commodore could avoid suspending him, or writing to the Admiralty, when the Captain even doubts the competency of that Board's judging of the propriety of the suspension, and of the line of conduct to be held when there are not in Port a sufficient number of captains to form a Court Martial.

"G. R." *

The following passage is interesting as throwing a light on the King's views in respect to the great question of Parliamentary Reform.

The King to Mr. Pitt.

(Extract.)

"*March* 20, 1785.

"Mr. Pitt must recollect that though I have ever thought it unfortunate that he had early engaged himself in this measure, yet that I have ever said that as he was clear of the propriety of the measure he ought to lay his thoughts before the House. That, out of personal regard to him, I would avoid giving any opinion to any one on the opening of the door to Parliamentary Reform except to him, therefore I am certain Mr. Pitt cannot suspect my having influenced any one on the occasion. If others choose, for base ends, to impute such a conduct to me, I must bear it as former false suggestions. Indeed, on a question of such magnitude I should think very ill of any man who took a part on either side without the maturest consideration, and who would suffer his civility to any one to make him vote contrary to his own opinion." †

The King, as Lord Macaulay has pointed out, not only

* MS. original.

† Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. ii. p. 30, 3rd Edition. Earl Stanhope's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. xv.

refrained from prejudicing others against his Minister's projected plan of Representative Reform, but, by the tenor of his speech from the throne, at the opening of the Session, he was understood expressly to recommend the measure to the consideration of Parliament.*

On the 6th of July, the King entered his three younger sons, the Princes Ernest, Augustus, and Adolphus—afterwards successively Dukes of Cumberland, Sussex, and Cambridge—as students of the University of Gottingen. To the Bishop of Worcester the King writes on the 30th of July, 1786. "My accounts from Gottingen, of the little Colony I have sent there, is very favourable. All three seem highly delighted and pleased with those that have the inspection of them. But what pleases me most is the satisfaction they express at the course of theology they have begun with Professor Less. Professor Heyne gives them lessons in the classics,† and has an assistant for the rougher work. They learn history, geography, moral philosophy, mathematics, and experimental philosophy; so that their time is fully employed. I think Adolphus ‡ at present seems the favourite of all, which from his lively manners is natural; but, the good sense of Augustus § will in the end prove conspicuous. ||

In the summer of this year, we find the health of the Princess Elizabeth occasioning considerable uneasiness to the King and the Royal Family. To the Bishop of Worcester the King writes on the 2nd of September—"We have had some alarm, in consequence of a spasmodic attack on the breast of Elizabeth, which occasioned some inflammation; but, by the skill of Sir George Baker, she is now

* Lord Macaulay's Biographies, p. 196.

† Professor Mayer was their instructor in the German language; Professor Heyne in Latin; Counsellor Less in Religion, and Counsellor Feder in Morality. The three princes lodged together in the same house. *Annual Register for* 1786, p. 206.

‡ H.R.H. the late Duke of Cambridge. § H.R.H. the late Duke of Sussex.

|| Bentley's Miscellany, vol. xxvi. pp. 334—5.

perfectly recovered, and in a few days will resume riding on horseback, which has certainly this summer agreed well with her." * On the 28th of the month, also, Mrs. Delany writes to Mrs. Frances Hamilton—"I thank God Princess Elizabeth seems now restored to that health which every one who knows her must wish her on her own account, as well as many others, to possess. She is still delicate, and does not attend them [the King and Queen] at the drawing room when they go to town. Last Friday evening, she had the goodness to permit me and Miss Port to spend the evening with her. Nothing can be more amiable or more engaging than she is." †

It was a short time previously to the date of this letter, that an event occurred which nearly proved fatal to the King's life, and which, beloved as he was at this period by his subjects, excited an extraordinary sensation. On the 2nd of August, the King was alighting from his carriage at the garden-entrance to St. James's Palace, when a woman of respectable appearance, apparently about thirty-six years of age, extricated herself from the crowd, and presented to the King a paper having the appearance of a petition, which he good-naturedly extended his hand to receive. At this moment the woman, with her left hand, made a direct thrust at the King's heart with a knife, which he fortunately avoided by making a backward movement. The blow was immediately followed up by another, on which latter occasion the point of the knife struck the King's waistcoat, but fortunately the weapon was worn so thin that it bent against his person. At this instant one of the royal attendants seized the woman's arm, and wrenched the knife from her, which fell to the ground. The bystanders, it would seem, were proceeding to wreak sum-

* Bentley's Miscellany, vol. xxvi. p. 335.

† Letters to Mrs. Frances Hamilton, p. 76. Life and Corresp. of Mrs. Delany, by Lady Llanover, vol. iii. p. 393, 2nd Series.

mary vengeance on the assassin, when the King generously interfered in her behalf. "The poor creature," he exclaimed, "is mad: do not hurt her; she has not hurt me." He then stepped forward and showed himself to the populace, assuring them that he was perfectly safe and uninjured.*

One of the first sentiments expressed by the King, on entering the palace, was a touching apprehension that he had ceased to be loved by his subjects. What had he done to them, he said, that he should merit such treatment? As for personal fear, as he had never betrayed any on former occasions when his life had been in imminent peril, it was not to be expected that he should manifest any in the present instance. When he entered the levee-room, where his presence was anxiously awaited, even those who were best acquainted with his constitutional fearlessness were astonished at his admirable imperturbability. All his thoughts seemed to be with the Queen and his daughters, whose feelings he feared might be suddenly shocked by some abrupt, or exaggerated, account of the danger he had escaped. He was therefore anxious to hurry back to them, not being yet aware that his wishes had, in the mean time, been anticipated by a kind and judicious friend. The Spanish Minister, M. del Campo, knowing that, after the levee, the King would be further delayed in London by having to preside at a Privy Council, had posted from the levee chamber to Windsor—not, as might be conjectured, with the officious object of being the first to announce the King's safety to the Queen, but to take advantage of his high position by demanding an audience with her, and keeping her engaged in conversation till the King should arrive to give his own account of the adventure.†

When the King returned to Windsor Castle there were

* Madame D'Arblay's Diaries and Letters, vol. iii. pp. 46, 47. London Gazette Extraordinary for 2 August 1786.

† M. Dutens' Memoirs of a Traveller now in Retirement, vol. iv. p. 223 &c.

present in the Queen's apartment, besides her Majesty, the Princess Royal, the Princess Augusta, the Duchess of Ancaster, and Lady Charlotte Bertie. The King, on perceiving the Spanish Minister, rightly conjectured his amiable motive for being there, and warmly pressed his hand. Advancing, in an animated manner, to the Queen—"Here I am;" he said gaily, "safe and well, as you see—but I have very narrowly escaped being stabbed." So abrupt an announcement produced a very different effect upon the Queen and the ladies of the Court, than that which the King had anticipated. "The Queen," writes Miss Burney, "was seized with a consternation that almost stupified her." A most painful silence followed, interrupted only by the sobs of the two Princesses. At length the Queen glanced round upon the Duchess of Ancaster and Lady Charlotte Bertie, both of whom had burst into tears. "How I envy you!" she exclaimed; "I cannot cry." The King, however, full of gratitude for his escape, persevered in maintaining his natural vivacity of manner. "With the gayest good humour," writes Miss Burney, "he did his utmost to comfort them; and then gave a relation of the affair with a calmness and unconcern that, had any one but himself been his hero, would have been regarded as totally unfeeling." * One of the most pleasing traits in the King's conduct on this occasion, was the considerate thoughtfulness with which he hastened to spare the feelings of his venerable friend, Mrs. Delany. "Their Majesties," she writes, "sent immediately to my house, to give orders I should not be told of it till the next morning, for fear the agitation should give me a bad night." It was accordingly not till the following morning, that the Dowager Lady Spencer, by their Majesties' desire, broke to her the particulars of the King's escape.†

* Madame D'Arblay's Diary and Letters, vol. iii. pp. 45, 46.

† Mrs. Delany's Letters to Mrs. Frances Hamilton, pp. 74—76.

In a society, in which the King was so tenderly loved, it was only to be expected that so painful and unlooked-for a catastrophe should create an extraordinary sensation. "The affection for the King," writes Miss Burney—who was by this time domesticated with the Royal Family—"has been felt by all his household, and has been at once pleasant and affecting to me to observe. There has not been a dry eye in either of the Lodges, on the recital of his danger; and not a face, but his own, that has not worn marks of care ever since." * On the very evening of the day on which his life was attempted, the King, much to the apprehension of the Queen, insisted on making his appearance among his subjects on the crowded terrace at Windsor, attended only by a single equerry. "The poor Queen," writes Miss Burney, "went with him pale and silent. The Princesses followed, scarce yet commanding their tears. In the evening, just as usual, the King had his concert, but it was an evening of grief and horror to his family. Nothing was listened to. Scarce a word was spoken. The Princesses wept continually. The Queen, still more deeply struck, could only from time to time hold out her hand to the King, and say—'I have you yet!'—When I went to the Queen at night," adds Miss Burney, "she scarce once opened her lips. Indeed, I could not look at her without feeling the tears ready to start into my eyes. But I was very glad to hear again the voice of the King, though only from the next apartment, and calling to one of his dogs." When Miss Burney, on the following morning attended at the Queen's toilet, her Majesty looked so ill, that it "was easy to see how miserable had been her night." †

It may be mentioned, as creditable to the sensibility both of Louis the Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette, that they severally deeply sympathized with the distress which the

* Madame D'Arblay's Diary and Letters, vol. iii. pp. 48. † *Ibid.*, pp. 48, 49.

attempt on George the Third's life entailed upon the royal family in England. In an undated letter, Mr. Eden, afterwards Lord Auckland, writes to Lord Carmarthen from Paris—"Her Most Christian Majesty, at Madame de Polignac's, on Tuesday, in a conversation respecting the circumstance of the late attempt at St. James's on his Majesty's person, was led to mention the peculiar and affectionate manner in which his Most Christian Majesty was shocked by the news when it was first mentioned to him. And she added, in very becoming terms, that, on such an occasion, she felt most for the Queen." *

Of the unhappy woman, who had been the occasion of so much excitement and of so many tears, a few words require to be said. She was twice examined before the Privy Council, where it was elicited that her name was Margaret Nicholson; that she was the daughter of George Nicholson, a barber at Stockton-upon-Tees; that the paper which she delivered to the King contained no other words than—"May it please your Majesty;" and lastly, that she was wedded to the notion that the Crown of England was hers by right, and that, if withheld from her, England would be deluged in blood for a thousand years. Being asked upon what ground she founded her claim, she replied that it was a mystery. Apparently she was, by nature, a woman of some shrewdness. One of the Lords of the Council having enquired of her why her memorial had contained no specific request, her answer was more rational than the question. So long, she replied, as she was able to effect her object, what could it matter whether the document was a written or a blank one? Of her insanity, however, not a doubt could exist, and accordingly, instead of dignifying her with a trial for high treason, she was committed to Bedlam.† "Mrs. Nicholson," writes the Duke of Dorset a

* Auckland Correspondence, vol. i. p. 152.

† Annual Register for 1786, p. 234.

few days afterwards, "is very quiet in Bedlam; she has desired to have the use of pen, ink, and paper, which they have given her." * Margaret Nicholson, it would seem, had formerly been a domestic servant in more than one private family. "My hand shakes for I am old," writes Sir John Sebright to Sir Robert Keith on the 10th of August; "and I am going to the Drawing Room with Lady Sebright, to assure their Majesties that *we* did not instigate our *quondam* housemaid, Margaret Nicholson, to attempt his sacred life—which may God preserve!" †

The attempt on the King's life fanned into enthusiasm the popular feeling which already ran high in his favour. Addresses of congratulation on his escape poured in to the foot of the throne from all parts of the kingdom. Windsor, for a day or two, was filled with company, who came to pay their respects to their Sovereign. The Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Sheriffs of London went in procession to St. James's to offer him their felicitations. The levee which, two days after the attack upon him, he held at St. James's Palace, was thronged, not only by foreign Ambassadors, by Bishops and Judges, but by venerable Peers whom age for some time past had excused from waiting upon their Sovereign, and by others, whom inclination seldom induced to enter the palace. The King himself is said to have more than once made the remark, that the hearty proofs which he received of his People's love on this occasion, more than made amends for the danger and annoyance to which he had been subjected.‡

* Auckland Correspondence, vol. i. p. 389.

† Memoirs and Correspondence of Sir R. M. Keith, K.B. vol. ii. p. 189.

‡ "George 3, his Court and Family," vol. ii. p. 64.

APPENDIX.

The Right Hon. Joseph Planta to the Right Hon. J. Wilson Croker.

"BLITHFIELD LODGE, LITCHFIELD, *Novr.* 17*th*, 1836.

"My dear Croker.

"Your first question is—'Did Queen Charlotte understand and enjoy the Delicacies of the Table,—meat, wine, &c.?' In answer to which I beg leave to say that Queen Charlotte fully understood everything that related to domestic life, and consequently could regulate a table to the most minute item. She could, moreover, *enjoy* and *appreciate* what was placed before her; but she was not in the slightest degree *a gourmande*, and could and did equally relish the simplest food.

"Your second question is—'Had Madame Schwellenberg * any real influence?' The answer I have received to this is, † that it is too important a question to answer on an uncertainty; but you may depend upon what follows as the truth. Madame Schwellenberg had no *political* influence whatever. The weight she had with the Queen was confined to Her Majesty's *domestic* arrangements. In these Madame S. certainly exercised considerable sway, and was, in short, so despotic, that she was better served, and more attended to, than the Queen herself. Her servant, Robère, (as she called him,) always waited at the step of her door, that she might not have to ring a bell; and a very constant expression of hers was, that if such and such a thing was good enough for her Majesty, it was not good enough for *her*.

"Your third query is—'Did the Equerries of George the Third

* The famous "Cerbera" of Madame D'Arblay's Diaries.

† The "answers" to this, and to Mr. Croker's other enquiries, were no doubt obtained from Miss Planta, who for many years was most confidentially employed about the person of Queen Charlotte. "Miss Planta's post in the Court Calendar," writes Miss Burney in 1786, "is that of English Teacher; but, it seems to me, that of personal attendant upon the two eldest Princesses. She is with them always when they sup, work, take their lessons, or walk."—*Madame D'Arblay's Diary and Letters*, vol. iii. p. 78.

ever dine with their Majesties at Windsor? To this I am answered—that with the answer to this question such Equerries, as might be alive, might not be pleased, as they would probably wish to have it supposed that they had *had* the honour of dining with his Majesty. From which it clearly appears that they *never did dine* with their Majesties.

"What do you say to Charles the Tenth's death? It is *as well*, is it not? and Louis Phillippe's *son* will never reign? That is my idea of the probabilities. Another failure of our Downing Street policy is at Lisbon, the very centre, (as it should be at least,) of our foreign policy and influence! Oh! what would our dear late friend,* who made his most eloquent effort on Portugal, have said if he had [thought] such things POSSIBLE *for England?* Three hundred Marines landed! to be recalled again in the evening at the dictation of a rascally rabble of national guard!

"Ever yours,

"J. PLANTA."

ORIGINAL LETTERS FROM GEORGE THE THIRD TO VISCOUNT WEYMOUTH.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *Nov. 24th*, 1775, pt. 11, A.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Lists of successions from Ireland of so old dates must rather surprise you, and I think it right therefore just to mention the cause of the delay. Major Dundas, of the 15th Light Dragoons, having applied, on the number of Lieutenant-Colonels to the Regiments in Ireland proving unfit for service when called upon to go with their corps to America, I directed that he must be recommended to one of the Regiments, unless, [by] Lieutenant-Colonel Meadows's exchanging from the 12th Light Dragoons for one of those Lieutenant Colonelcies, Dundas could be recommended to succeed him. Lord Harcourt has never explained that affair, till the letter you communicated to me the day before yesterday; therefore the delay comes from Ireland. I have drawn the lists that you may order the Commissions to be prepared. As some of the lists come to be notified by the Secretary at War, the Regiments being now on the British Establishment, I have therefore sent those to him, consequently the whole proposed by the Lord Lieutenant has been consented to.

"Lord Barrington does not object to his recommending Ensigns for

* George Canning. † MS. Original.

the additional companies of the 53rd, 54th, and 27th Regiments, as proposed in the Lord Lieutenant's letter of the 2nd November.

"The Lists of successions transmitted on the 14th of November are perfectly regular. The Commissions must therefore in consequence be prepared."

[No date.]

"Lord Weymouth,

"I desire you will consult Lord Granby, Lord Barrington, and Major General Hervey on the enclosed report of the Court Martial; as you did when the two soldiers were tried on the former occasion."

[No date.]

"I am extremely glad to find the law-proceedings will now begin to move; the more so on account of the resolution come to at the meeting last night, which meets my thorough approbation."

"St. James's, *May 24th*, 1778, $\frac{m}{10}$ pt. 11, A.M.

"Lord Weymouth,

"I transmit you the letter I received yesterday from Lord North, with a copy of my answer, and the letter I received from him in the evening; also the draft of one I propose sending him to morrow. I desire you will bring them after the Drawing Room this day. I wish to see you before my conversation with the Attorney General. Do not come later than three."

"Kew, *May 25th*, 1778.

"Lord Weymouth,

"Probably before you receive this you will have seen Mr. Thurlow,* and had a full account of what passed between us. I desire you will come here to morrow a little before two. I shall expect you in your undress.

"P.S. The enclosed is a copy of the letter I have sent to Lord North, which I desire you will return in one of the black boxes." †

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* Thurlow, at this time Attorney General, was constituted Lord Chancellor on the 3rd of the following month, and created Baron Thurlow.

† "Agreeably to your recommendation, I have told the Attorney General that I mean to accompany the Great Seal by the reversion of a Tellership and a floating

"KEW, *May* 31*st*, 1778.

"Lord Weymouth,

"As it is necessary that you should, as early as possible, be acquainted with every political transaction, I enclose you a letter I received last evening from Lord Suffolk, the copy of the Solicitor General's* letter, which I thought too material to return without receiving that, and my answer in consequence, which was meant to be civil, and, in the present unexplained situation, to be cautious. You will return them when you come to Court."

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *Novr.* 20*th*, 1778, $\frac{m}{10}$ pt. 8, A.M.

"Lord Weymouth is desired to send his opinion whether there is any objection to communicate the three letters, which have passed since those seen last week; also whether Lord Suffolk knows Lord Weymouth has perused them, as I wish to be correct in the whole of my conduct.†

"Did anything occur at the meeting yesterday concerning the speech, or any other point?"

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, *April* 5*th*, 1779.

"Lord Weymouth's draft to Sir Joseph Yorke, I would fain hope, must open the eyes of the States General, or at least convince them that it is worthy of mature consideration whether the town of Amsterdam, at the instigation of France, is not plunging them into a very untoward scene, and for which they are by no means prepared."

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pension." *Letter from the King to Lord North*, 24 *May*, 1778. This is most probably the letter referred to by the King, though it may possibly have been another letter, written by him to Lord North on the same day on which he writes to Lord Weymouth (May 25) relative to a motion of Sir William Meredith's in the House of Commons for papers relative to the State of the Navy. See *Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol. i. p. 119. Ed. 1858.

* Alexander Wedderburn. On the 11th of the following month he was appointed to succeed Thurlow as Attorney General.

† "The letters alluded to by the King have probably reference either to Lord North's earnest entreaties, at this time, to be allowed to resign the Premiership, or else to Lord Barrington's resignation of the post of Secretary at War, which, on the 16th of the following month, was conferred upon Charles Jenkinson, afterwards Earl of Liverpool. "I authorize you," writes the King to Lord North on the 24th of November, "to offer the place of Secretary at War in the first place to Mr. Jenkinson, and, if he declines, to Lord Beauchamp." *Lord Brougham's Statesmen of the Time of George* 3, vol i. pp. 124, 125. Ed. 1858.

ORIGINAL LETTERS FROM WILLIAM PITT, EARL OF CHATHAM, TO THOMAS HOLLIS, ESQ.

[From the prominent part which Lord Chatham has played in a large portion of these pages, the author is induced to lay before the reader the following letters, or rather notes, addressed by that great man to the eccentric, and once well-known philanthropist, virtuoso, and antiquary, Thomas Hollis, Esq., of Corscombe in Dorsetshire. The originals are in the possession of Edgar Disney, Esq., of the Hyde, Essex, by whose kindness the author is enabled to introduce them into this work.]

THOMAS HOLLIS, whose ardent attachment to civil and religious liberty, and whose princely encouragement of literature and the fine arts, are still remembered in other countries besides England, was born in London on the 14th of April 1720. In the partial language of a contemporary—"He was a man formed on the severe and exalted plan of ancient Greece, in whom was united the humane and disinterested virtue of Brutus, with the active and determined spirit of Sidney, illustrious in his manner of using an ample fortune, not by spending it in the parade of life which he despised, but by assisting the deserving, and encouraging the arts and sciences, which he promoted with great zeal and affection, knowing the love of them leads to moral and intellectual beauty; was a warm and strenuous advocate in the cause of public liberty and virtue, and for the rights of human nature and private conscience. His humanity and generosity were not confined to the small spot of his own country. He sought for merit in every part of the globe, considering himself as a citizen of the world, but concealed his acts of munificence, being contented with the consciousness of having done well."* Horace Walpole also—in summing up the names of the few persons of note in England, in 1769, who had avowedly embraced republican principles—speaks in very favourable terms of Hollis as—"a gentleman of strict honour and good fortune, a virtuoso, and so bigoted to his principles, that, though a humane and good man, he would scarce converse with any man who did not entirely agree with his opinions. He had no parts, but spent large sums in publishing prints and editions of all the heroes and works on his own side of the question. But he was formed to adorn a pure republic, not to shine in a depraved monarchy."†

* Annual Register for 1774, pp. 83—4.

† Walpole's Memoirs of the Reign of George 3, vol. iii. p. 331.

Among other works, printed, at a great expense, by Hollis, were the political writings of Milton, Algernon Sidney, and James Harrington. According to his biographer, the story of his life was a mere catalogue of generous and public-spirited actions, there being few useful or benevolent institutions of which he was not a member and a benefactor. The British Museum was indebted to him for many valuable gifts. The library at Berne was enriched by him with a valuable collection of English books, which he presented anonymously. To Harvard College, in the United States, he was not only a munificent benefactor in his lifetime, but, by will, bequeathed 500*l.* to the College library, to be laid out in books.*

The high opinion entertained by Hollis of the splendid talents of Lord Chatham, as well as gratitude for his exertions in the cause of civil and religious liberty, were probably the original occasions of his making the acquaintance of the "great Commoner." This high opinion, however, became twice temporarily affected, once in 1761, by Mr. Pitt accepting a pension for himself and a peerage for Lady Chatham; and again in 1766, when the man of the people deserted the House of Commons for a coronet.† On this latter occasion, the indignation of Hollis, at what he regarded as the apostacy of his idol, appears not only to have been excessive, but to have been the cause of the discontinuance of their correspondence from that time till the month of October 1772. For instance, to Edmund Quincy, junior, at Boston, Hollis writes on the 1st Octr. 1766, that it is with the "deepest concern" that he has seen the "recent unparalleled prostitution and apostacy of the once magnanimous and almost divine *******, who is now totally lost in parchment and Buteism;" and he adds—"The Thane, [Bute] exults prodigiously on the occasion; and he, and all his mongrels, are, in reality, in full scent and cry to run him down with some present shews of deference and power towards him, lest he should retreat again before he had done dirty work enough in public, to render his character in all respects utterly irretrievable. Unhappy man! to have survived his own matchless administration, and his speech for the repeal of the stamp act." On another occasion [6th February 1767] Hollis speaks of Lord Chatham, as "Lieutenant Turnover acting as commander in chief, at this present, by permission of White-rose, the favourite, [Bute] who would be thought retired." ‡

The following few brief particulars, relating to Hollis, have been

* Holmes's American Annals, vol. ii. p. 266, *note*.

† See *ante*, vol. i. pp. 84, 372.

‡ Archdeacon Blackburne's Memoirs of Hollis, pp. 323, 340, 355.

kindly communicated to the author from a private and most trustworthy source.

"I am sorry to say I cannot remember any anecdotes of Mr. Hollis worth your having. Such trifles, however, as I can call to mind I will write down.

"Did you ever hear that, when his lodgings in London were on fire, the only thing that he thought of saving was the portrait of John Milton, now at the Hyde? This he did far more out of admiration of his political opinions, than on account of the grandeur of his genius as a poet.

"He adopted Brutus's dagger and the Cap of Liberty as symbols of his Republican opinions, as represented on the pedestal of the marble bust of him at the Hyde.

"In a strange whim, he named some of his fields after Grecian and Roman patriots and heroes, such as Brutus and Alcibiades; and even after abstract things, such as Reason and Liberty.

"His *finale* was his burial by torchlight—as some said, in republican humility—in one of his fields. Others thought this eccentricity savoured more of vanity, but, odd as he was, *I* believe he was sincere." *

Mr. Hollis's death took place at his seat in Dorsetshire, on the 1st of January 1774, seventeen days after the date of the last note addressed to him by Lord Chatham. He was talking to his workmen in one of his fields at Corscombe, when he fell down in a fit and expired.†

I.

"*Octr. 9th*, 1761.

"Mr. Pitt presents his compliments and sincere acknowledgments to Mr. Hollis; is justly proud of such a testimony, and trusts that the manly and the virtuous will not condemn retreat, when the means of acting to good and worthy purposes are at an end." ‡

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* See also the Gentleman's Magazine for 1790, part 2, p. 702.

† Archdeacon Blackburne's Memoirs of Thomas Hollis, p. 465.

‡ This note is in reply to a complimentary one from Hollis dated the 7th October 1761, two days after Mr. Pitt's resignation of office. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 83. "At the time of writing this letter," writes Hollis (*MS.*), "I was ignorant of the pension of £3000 a-year, granted to Mr. Pitt, &c. It is true, I wish this pension had not been accepted; but yet it can never be considered as an equivalent for his services; or as taken by him from any other motive than as SUBSISTENCE Money." See also *Archdeacon Blackburne's Memoirs of Thomas Hollis*, p. 122, where, in nearly the same language, the latter excuses Mr. Pitt's conduct in a letter to a friend.

II.

"St. James's Square, *May 5th*, 1762.

"Mr. Pitt presents his compliments to Mr. Hollis, returns him many most sincere thanks for the favour of his obliging note, and trusts he will be persuaded that Mr. Pitt feels infinitely more satisfaction and pride from the very friendly and kind opinion of Mr. Hollis, than from all the expressions of His Holyness."*

III.

"Hayes, *Novr.* 19*th*, 1764.

"Accept, dear Sir, my best acknowledgments for your obliging trouble in forwarding the parcel from him who is now no more.† How affecting the circumstance! and how endeared this monument of his esteem! '*Debitâ spargam lachrymâ favillam.*' Your friendly heart must, I know, partake the friendly duty. I am with the warmest sentiments of esteem and consideration,

"Dear Sir,

"Your faithful Friend

"And most humble Servant,

"William Pitt."

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* This is an allusion to a letter addressed to Hollis by a Mr. Thomas Jenkins, dated Rome, April 17, 1762, the contents of which had evidently been communicated to Lord Chatham.—"People here were astonished to hear of our great success at Martinico, which had been represented by the French and their friends as impossible. The Pope told an English gentleman, Mr. Weld of Dorsetshire, who was introduced to him on Tuesday last, that the taking of Martinico was so unexpected an event, that if not so well attested, it could not have been believed; and that the glory of the English nation was now at such a height, that he, the Pope himself, should have esteemed it an honour to be an Englishman. The plan for taking Martinico was, if I mistake not, Mr. Pitt's." *Hollis' MS.* See *ante*, vol. i. p. 119, note.

† Count Francesco Algarotti, chamberlain to the King of Prussia, F.R.S. and A.S.S. He dedicated to Mr. Pitt his work, the "Saggio sopra l'Opera in Musica," and to Mr. Hollis his "Saggio sopra l'Academia di Francia che è in Roma." The latter had conceived a great affection for him and was a warm admirer of his accomplishments and virtues. The Count died at Pisa, 24th June 1763. *Archd. Blackburne's Memoirs of Hollis, pp.* 199, 201. This note is in reply to a short one from Hollis, dated 14th November 1764, the copy of which is indorsed by him—"On sending him a parcel, which was forwarded from Leghorn, April 16, by Count Algarotti, containing the first two volumes of a new edition of his work printed there this year, which parcel came not to my hands untill this day."

IV.

"BOND STREET, *Tuesday, Jany.* 21*st* [1766].*

"Mr. Pitt sends all thanks and respects to Mr. Hollis, strengthened by his concurrence, animated by his approbation.

"He trusts that his sons will grow up to feel that the head of Phocion,† sent to Burton-Pynsent from the heart of a Hollis, will ever stand the proudest ornament of our House. The dissertation is indeed masterly."

V.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Octob*r. *ye* 1*st*, 1772.

"Dear Sir,

"Your very kind attentions bestow equal pleasure and honour on one, who will be too happy to revisit, under the same polite and benevolent auspices, beauties which have left lively impressions. I understand the Mayor's day at Lyme is to fall in the course of next week, and, moreover, some engagements do not leave me master of my time before Monday ye 12th October. If that day should suit Mr. Hollis's convenience, I will give myself the satisfaction of meeting him at Axminster that evening, and hope to have the pleasure of travelling with him the next morning from *beauty* to *beauty*, according to the pleasing route he has been so good to point out. I am much indebted to Mr. Tucker and Mr. Coude for the obliging offer of lodging me; but we found, upon examining, the chambers of the inn such as, for one night, not to wish any other. Lady Chatham desires to present her best compliments, and the young people, who feel honoured by such mention of them, beg to offer theirs.

"I am with truest esteem and perfect consideration,

"Dear Sir,

"Your most obedient and most humble Servant,

"CHATHAM."

VI.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Octr. 7th*, 1772.

"Dear Sir,

"Abundance of real thanks for the polite attention of your kind

* This note was written at a period of considerable excitement. See a note from Mr. Pitt to Lady Chatham of the same date. *Chatham Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 373.

† "An antique bas relievo in oriental alabaster purchased for him [Hollis] some years before for twenty guineas by Mr. Jackson out of the Palazzo Lancellotti at Rome." *Memoirs of Hollis by Archdeacon Blackburne*, p. 298.

letter, which assures me of the pleasure of meeting you on Monday evening at Axminster. If weather proves favourable, nothing will be wanting to render the jaunt delightful. The great Master of the picture will, I trust, bestow the finest lights to view it in. What you tell me of the partial disposition of the worthy people of Lyme is justly valued and felt; but let me add, what I do not hesitate to confess, that the sentiments with which you honour me, and the value you attribute to my past efforts, leave hardly room in my heart for other sensations.

"Lady Chatham desires to present her best compliments, and many thanks for the favour of the hare.

"I am with the highest esteem,

"Dear Sir,

"Your most faithful and most humble Servant,

"CHATHAM."

VII.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Octr. ye* 21, 1772.

"Mr. Hollis is desired to accept many sincere acknowledgments for his kind attention in sending Mr. Bowring, a man of excellent understanding in his way; a living Museum Rusticum; more especially a true son of Pan, and consummate in sheep.

"Lady Chatham desires to present her best compliments. Our young people are *flattered* and *alarmed* with the thought of exhibiting to Mr. Hollis their puerile powers of the Scene.* Bold is the attempt; but Papa and Mama, who, not undelighted, rock this *cradle of Tragedy*, exhort them to dismiss their fears. Mr. Hollis will allow them to send timely notice of the performance, and he will, by his presence, give much real pleasure and honour to old and young at Burton-Pynsent." †

VIII.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Saturday, Octr.* 31*st* [1772].

"Many compliments from Lord and Lady Chatham attend Mr. Hollis. They wish extremely for the pleasure of receiving him; and our adventurous youth aspire to have the honour of shewing him somewhat of the inside of their little theatre. Wednesday next is fixed for displaying it,

* See Chatham Correspondence, vol. iv. p. 240.

† Endorsed by Hollis—"Delivered to Farmer John Bowring, who had been at Burton by desire of Lord Chatham, to view his lordship's estate there, in order to the better management of it."

and if Mr. Hollis will be so good to accept on that day a dinner, (at two o'clock,) a well-aired bed at night, and a most cordial welcome, he will bestow a high satisfaction on his humble servants, old and young."

IX.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Nov.* 26, 1772.

"Lord and Lady Chatham's best compliments attend Mr. Hollis, together with abounding thanks for the honor of his kind note. The large approbation he is so good to express of the noviciate of the small tragedians, could not but touch sensibly, and powerfully animate, the various parties concerned in a picture, drawn in the spirit of Athens or Rome, and which would have been flattering, whenever applied, in either. Old and young all beg to offer their united grateful acknowledgments for sentiments so partial.

"Lady Chatham claims with pleasure her right to add her special portion of thanks for the favor of the basket of game.

"Lord Chatham will peruse with avidity the publications of the honest New-Englanders; genuine fruits of unsophisticated, masculine good sense, and of virtue uncorrupted." *

X.

Lady Chatham to Mr. Hollis.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Decr.* 10*th*, 1772, past three o'clock.

"Honest Farmer Bowring wishing to return as soon as may be, Lady Chatham desires to offer these hasty and very sincere acknowledgments to Mr. Hollis for the honor of his most obliging attention. He will not wonder, if he should not be forgot at the convivial Board

* This note is a reply to an adulatory letter from Hollis to Lord Chatham, of which the following is a characteristic extract:—"Thomas Hollis has the honor to present his best compliments and thanks to Lord and Lady Chatham for their kind reception of him at Burton-Pynsent, and for the very singular and truly elegant entertainment of which they were pleased to make him partaker; an entertainment that he never thinks of but with applauses and wonder! Plutarch himself, that refined good man, had he seen it, must have been delighted, and given equal rank, at once, to the Family of Chatham with the Gracchi. He requests the favor of Lady Chatham, to accept a basket of game ['a hare, a pheasant, and two brace of woodcocks.' *MS. Memo. by Hollis.*], and he begs his most particular respects and acknowledgments to Lord Pitt, Lady Hester, Lady Harriot, and the two younger gentlemen. It is hard to say in what way this astonishing young set would shew themselves in comedy, should they take to it?"

to which we are just sitting down, and that the *Lipari of Old England** (his kind present of the day,) should be destined to flow in grateful libations to his truly honoured name.

"Lord Chatham, who has a fit of the gout, though not of the most severe, desires to join in all sentiments of respectful esteem, and warm good wishes. The young people beg to offer their best compliments."

XI.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Decr. ye 29th*, 1772.

"Lord and Lady Chatham desire to enquire after Mr. Hollis's health, and to offer him all the old-fashioned, kind remembrances of the season; which they trust he will accept, not as compliments, but real good wishes.

"Lord Chatham admires and loves Mr. Tucker's sermon before the respectable body of the Massachusetts; the divine Sydney rendered practical, and the philosophic Locke more demonstrative! What a model for the 30th of January,† did not visions of mitres and translations hide these things from the eyes of Court apostles!

"Gout has made a visit, and seems kindly taking leave."

XII.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Jany. 4th*, 1773.

"Accept, my dear Sir, very many sincere thanks for the trouble you are so good to take about my farming cares, and for the kind manner in which you employ your pen upon a *rural administration*, lying at present in little less disorder than that in higher places. I taste much the very friendly and solid advice you so obligingly suggest, to let a *part*, or the *whole*, of my land here; and shall certainly [adopt] this prudent idea, as soon as some plans of amusement, more than profit, are somewhat farther advanced. One principal object, in the class of amusement, I want first to complete, and this is, an easy and agreeable communication round the whole farm for my riding, and for the little

* A "quarter barrel" of mead, which had been sent by Hollis to Burton-Pynsent, with the following note—"Thomas Hollis has the honor to present his compliments respectfully to Lady Chatham, and to request her ladyship's obliging acceptance of a small barrel of mead, which has been brewed these thirty years."

† The anniversary of the execution of Charles the First.

chaise, as Lady Chatham is, as well as my daughters, very fond of this commodious and healthful way of taking air and exercise.

"Whenever I shall carry into execution the letting part of the estate, Moretown, I cannot wish a more desirable tenant than John Petty; of whose skill in farming, and of whose integrity, I do not think the worse on account of his Bucolic orthography.* His hand-writing is very good; his youth is compensated by the sobriety of his disposition, and by good training under the eye of a father, a substantial, honest, knowing, farmer. I should be glad to see John Petty, together with good Master Bowring (whose heartiness and good farming sense charm me), whenever it may best suit their convenience, and propose to settle with John Petty to come as Baily, to act under my friend Bowring's advice. My present Baily is to go from me at Lady Day.

"I now blush, my dear Sir, to cast my eye back over this length of small businesses, with which your goodness allows me to trouble you; and that, too, before one of the most interesting articles of your kind letter, your own health. I trust all the worst of a cold so violent is over; and I should be freed from anxiety on the subject by what you say of your convalescence, if I did not know that the care of yourself is the least likely to employ your thoughts. I hope, however, you will be more careful of a thing, which, from the generous use you make of life, is not, most evidently, to be considered as your own.

"All here unite in warm wishes, that health, and the blessings known to the ingenuous, noble, and benevolent, may be ever yours. I am, with respectful and affectionate esteem,

"Dear Sir,

"Your most faithful and obliged humble servant,

"CHATHAM."

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* Lord Chatham, having found farming a not very profitable speculation, would appear to have requested Hollis to consult with John Bowring, and recommend him a person for "Baily." Accordingly Hollis writes back, that Bowring recommends a young man, named John Petty, the son of a substantial farmer, and most respectable Protestant Dissenter, who is willing to be security to the amount of a thousand pounds for his son, if required. At the same time, Hollis delicately suggests whether it would not be more to Lord Chatham's advantage to let the whole, or part of his estate; the elder Petty being quite willing to rent it, and to put in his son, John Petty, as tenant to the Earl. "Tenants of character in these times," he writes, "you could not want. Impositions, and vexations numberless, you would forego. Profit you would reap; and hay, corn, butter, cheese, milk, cattle, you might receive from the tenants at fixed market-price; *cheaper far*, it is probable, than your lordship, or most other noblemen or gentlemen, could raise them. My lord, I hope I am not too free; but the subject draws me with a hearty, downright good will."—"May every superior felicity," concludes Hollis, "attend the family at Burton-Pynsent—a Nonsuch—and your lordship be preserved to us long, a pillar of cloud and of fire, to go

XIII.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Jany. 5th*, 1773.

"A thousand thanks, my dear Sir, for the speedy arrival of my trusty friend, Bowring, who has just left me to pass the evening with Mr. Speke. Bowring's discretion went so far, as to drop his fellow-traveller, John Petty, at the inn at Curry, lest so sudden an apparition might cause too much speculation among those whom it may concern. This piece of circumspection is the cause of my having nothing as yet to say on those *letters of recommendation*, as Lord Bacon terms it, the *outside* of John Petty. I am to see the young man tomorrow morning, and have, in a manner, previously settled matters with my friend Bowring, in pursuance of your judicious advice.

"I mean to fix the day for Petty's coming for the first of February, which period will allow time for early fairs for cattle. Other considerations also are strong for putting an end to present misrule. A *parting* Bayly cannot be too soon parted with. I have proposed for the *outset* of my new Governor, 25*l.* per annum, lodging and board, which, I imagine, will satisfy; and I would gladly have all parties pleased.

"The friendliness and hearty goodwill of your honest Dorsetshire farmers in my favour, flatter me highly, and nourish some reflections solidly pleasing to my mind. The good tidings contained in your kind letter, relating to your health, rejoice me greatly; and the *vivâ voce* testimony of honest master John Bowring, to the same effect, was an additional satisfaction. Believe me, dear Sir, with every sentiment of highest regard,

"Most faithfully and affectionately yours,

"CHATHAM.

"P.S.—My present shepherd is a very old servant of the place, and an honest fellow; no favourite of the reigning Powers.

"I have seen John Petty this morning, and like him well. His looks bespeak order and rule, with ingenuous plainness. Shoulders fit to bear the weight of more acres than mine!"

XIV.

"*Wednesday, ½ past one, Feb.* 3, 1773.

"My dear Sir,

"The instructive conference with my honest counsellors is just broke up. I am greatly edified by the intelligence of both, in the

before and lead these nations, and their elected family, the way through those difficulties and dangers which surround them, and which no Englishman nor Irishman could ever have had the heart to seek out!" *Hollis' MS.*

respective characters of their minds. The gift of utterance is with Master Petty. More clearness and sagacity I have rarely seen; Master Bowring, no way behind in native sense, and overflowing with heartiness and zeal. Your goodness in giving me this profitable, and, to my mind, pleasing acquaintance, is a very real obligation, added to no short list of friendly offices treasured in memory.

"The account of your inflammation of the lungs alarms still, though past. Some retrospects cannot be viewed but with sensible pain. Let it, my dear Sir, I beseech you, serve for an useful lesson of caution for the future. Nothing so dangerous as a sudden revulsion of humours, tending downwards, especially by wetting the feet. I must not delay my parting guests by indulging, as I wish, the pleasure of conversing with you.

"Boston is, I find, in a high ferment of spirit. The Town meeting has honoured me, by order, with their resolutions printed. These worthy New-England men feel as Old England ought to do. If rights and liberty were truly dear here, they could not be opposed there. Virtues would not be crimes, even in the eyes of courtiers. Corrupt as the times are, God only knows the issue.*

"Lady Chatham presents her best compliments, and the Youth, you favour so highly, beg to offer their respects. I am, with warmest esteem and consideration, dear Sir,

"Your most faithful and obedient,

"CHATHAM."

XV.

(In Lady Chatham's hand-writing.)

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Wednesday, March* 31*st*, 1773.

"Lord Chatham cannot let good Master Henry Petty return, without making him the bearer of all respects and thankful acknowledgments to Mr. Hollis, for the interest he most kindly takes in his recovery.†

* Hollis writes to Lord Chatham, Feb. 15, 1773;—"I shall take the liberty to send your Lordship another New England Publication, the title of which is at present forgotten, though reprinted in England by my means. It contains, among other matters, a political dissertation, first inserted in a Boston newspaper, which is thought to be a beauty, and shows fully the genius, and general turn of thinking, of the present North Americans." *Hollis' MS.*

† "Farmer Bowring and the elder Petty seem to have been charmed with Lady Chatham's good sense and condescension. To Lord Chatham Hollis writes on the 14th of April following;—"Farmer Petty and Mr. Bowring are full of the praises of Lady Chatham. 'She is a woman of business too,' cried Farmer Petty.—'What a fine creature to breed out of!' replied Farmer Bowring." *Hollis' MS.*

"The friendly gout now seems returning to its due course, after being checked by the sore throat and fever, which came across, and much disturbed nature in her intended operations. He rejoices much in Mr. Hollis's perfect health, and was pleased to hear of him ranging the wholesome heights of Dorset, breathing pure morning air, and looking down with regret, like the guardian spirit in 'Comus,'—

'On the rank vapour of this sin-worn world.'

Lord Chatham hopes the prolongation of Mr. Hollis's stay at Urles will more firmly establish the health he now enjoys.

"Master Henry Petty is the most intelligent of men in his way. The son promises not to degenerate from the sire; is active, provident, and always in his business. It is not doubted but he will prove a complete bailiff.

"The Secretary, Lady Chatham, desires to assure Mr. Hollis of her best compliments and all good wishes. The young family beg to be allowed to join in the same."

XVI.

"Burton-Pynsent, *April ye* 13*th*, 1773.

"I flatter myself, my dear Sir, that an account of my advances towards health will not be uninteresting at Urles, upon which place, I am happy to hear, that blessing smiles. I am recovering, thank God, apace, and hope soon to have strength to mount my steed. In the mean time, I air daily, some hours, in my coach.

"I am led also by your kind friendship to talk to you of another matter, not less near to me than myself, and my own health. This matter is, the instruction of Lord Pitt in military science, to which his mind strongly calls him. Will you allow me, then, without further apology or preface, as between friend and friend, to jump at once to my request of your advice and assistance? Captain Kennedy, the very short taste of whose acquaintance at Lyme struck me extremely, together with his distinguished reputation as an officer, and your knowledge of his many accomplishments, is the object of this letter.

"Pitt has an ardent desire to be instructed in Fortification; is well grounded in mathematics; and has an aptness to use the pencil. Where could this laudable desire to be initiated into the scientific branch of war be so advantageously satisfied, as under the instructions of Captain Kennedy, could it be possible to obtain such a particular favour? I am in no way entitled to take the liberty to sound this respectable veteran

on the subject. Your advice and assistance, my dear Sir, is my only resource, which I shall be highly indebted by being honoured with. Should my most earnest wish, in this very interesting affair, be favourably received by Captain Kennedy, Pitt might pass some time at Lyme; and perhaps, if his health permits, Captain Kennedy might be prevailed with to do me the honour to pass a month in the summer at Burton-Pynsent, where the pleasure of his company would be sure to give very real pleasure. My coach, too, would always be at his command to convey him, from time to time, to Lyme, as often as he pleased.*

"I feel how great a freedom I am taking with Mr. Hollis; but *the name*, which implies all kind offices to man, and to me in the largest measure, assures me of forgiveness, and forbids more excuses.

"Lady Chatham desires to present her best compliments, and our young Academy beg to offer theirs.

"I am, with highest esteem,

"My dear Sir,

"Your most obedient,

"And obliged humble Servant,

"CHATHAM."

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* The allusions to "Captain Kennedy," in this letter, will be best explained by the following extract of a letter from Hollis to Lord Chatham, dated April 14, 1773:—"It is apprehended," he writes, "that in point of ability as an Engineer, experience and skill as an officer, and general accomplishments as a gentleman, Mr. Kennedy is the *very man* to initiate, guide on, Lord Pitt, in his laudable design of outline knowledge in the manner figured by your lordship; that Mr. Kennedy will be proud of such an *elève*, and feel the great honour of your lordship's confidence and trust in him; that, if it shall be necessary, he will receive Lord Pitt into his house, and treat him there, in a plain real way, with a fit decorum and respect; that he will accept cheerfully, and with highest content, satisfaction and gratitude, and, rather with the need of it, any 'honorary' with which your lordship shall think proper to reward him." Kennedy is described by Hollis as a "great invalid," with "some peculiarities of disposition;" as wedded to the "pure and benign air" of Lyme Regis, and that probably he "could not, would not think it safe to remove from it, on any consideration, no not even for a month."—"In the house with Mr. Kennedy," adds Hollis, "lives Mrs. ——, of many years his mistress: it is probable for convenience, and little else. She is a comely person, about thirty; sensible, clean, an excellent housekeeper, and somewhat given to prate and to village consequence and scandal, to which the acuteness, turn, humour, irony, of her colleague, have, in a principal degree, led her on. Six years of the flower of my life have I devoted to see 'many cities and many men's manners,' and, before and since, have turned over many books ancient and modern, but never, through my whole observation, have I met the character of Mr. Kennedy." Hollis mentions, in this letter, that he had been intimately acquainted with Captain Kennedy since the year 1750, when they had met at Venice.

XVII.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *April 18th*, 1773.

"Dear Sir,

"I have most gratefully felt, and maturely weighed, the various parts of your kind letter, in answer to my request.

"The lights therein contained, and the prudent advice so obligingly suggested, are ample to my purpose, and leave nothing to be desired on the head of information. As I understand you are to go to Lyme very shortly, I shall esteem it a most real favour, if you will break, and propose to Mr. Kennedy my earnest wishes and request, that Lord Pitt might receive from *him* the best lessons I can desire for him on that essential, but little understood branch of service by our young officers, Fortification.

"I imagine that two or three months, under such able instruction, might suffice to give a general outline of that scientific branch, and that the principles of Vauban, for example, and the construction of various polygons, on that great man's propositions, might be very thoroughly gone through in that time; so as that afterwards Lord Pitt might work with some utility by himself, till he goes out into the army. His mind is strongly bent on the pursuit, and I am sure he will be a diligent disciple.

"If Mr. Kennedy's answer should be favourable, I propose that Lord Pitt should pass *some months* of the summer at Lyme, in *a lodging*, which shall be taken for him, if I should not arrange matters so as to come to that place myself, perhaps for a month. I hope to be able to send him, towards the latter end of May, but can fix nothing absolutely yet, as to the time.

"I have now, my dear Sir, used very freely your indulgence in permitting me to trouble you; but knowing perfectly that you meant I should avail myself of your good offices, I will not add to your trouble by many excuses.

"Things seem hastening to a crisis at Boston. Their answer to Governor Hutchinson* contains many curious particulars, and is strongly reasoned, but the times are most adverse to their claims. Even the Opposition deserted them, and the Whigs are offended, or take the pretext at the Bostonians raising the power of the Crown, at the expense of the authority of Parliament. I have ever found *this* thrown in my way, when I spoke in favour of these true sons of civil and religious liberty. I look forward to the time with very painful anxiety. The

* Thomas Hutchinson, Governor of Massachusetts.

whole Constitution is a shadow. Toleration has been again proved a mockery. The Bishop of Lincoln's lawn is pure and unspotted. I shall henceforth call him the *Protestant Bishop*.*

"I am, with perfect esteem,

"Dear Sir,

"Your most obedient,

"And affectionate humble servant,

"CHATHAM.

"P.S.—Lady Chatham desires her best compliments. Honest Bowring is delightful, and his rural encomiums more flattering than courtly compliments."

XVIII.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *May ye 9th*, 1773.

"Lord and Lady Chatham's compliments, best compliments, attend Mr. Hollis. They are anxious to know how his cold is, and will rejoice to learn that he no way suffered by the very kind visit with which he honoured them. The three days' silence since gives much satisfaction, as it signifies Mr. Tucker's consent. All wishes here are bent to taste, when practicable, the rare climate of Lyme out of England, though non-residence of the Prebend will rob the place of a great part of its health-inspiring influence.

"The most ingenious and deep-reaching James Harrington is, as I conceived, express and full for a national, established religion. His authority is weighty, and my notions concerning *some establishment* are chiefly regulated by his principles. I only think he puts toleration, which has a *right* to be *absolute*, under too much control; for he subjects it to an appeal, in certain cases, to magistrates, and the council of religion, to determine in matters of private judgment and conscience.

"May I beg my compliments to Mr. Kennedy?"

XIX.

"LYME REGIS, *Tuesday*, past 8.

"Lord Chatham's best compliments and abundant thanks attend Mr. Hollis for the honour of his very kind enquiries after the health of Burton and the Lyme Detachment. All, respectively, are, I thank God,

* Dr. John Green. He died in 1779.

well. The singular charms of humble rocks, from which we are just returned, (William, Mr. Wilson,* and the writer of the note,) fill our imaginations beyond expression, and balance the softer beauties of Pinney. Lyme Regis and its environs grow more and more into admiration.

"The rapid progress my young Engineer makes under the admirable and kind instructions of his accomplished master, fill my mind with as much solid satisfaction and joy, as the beauties of nature around us feed the eye with delight. We wish particularly for the benevolent friend and kind guide to all these pleasures and advantages.

"The Riddle of Darkness will soon unfold itself, and save the labour of expounding."

XX.

"Lyme Regis, *Tuesday Night, July 20th*, 1773.

"Many compliments attend Mr. Hollis from Lord Chatham. He is much mended by Lyme, the delicious; is going, for two or three days, to Burton, and hopes to have the satisfaction of carrying to Lady Chatham a good account of Mr. Hollis's health; tidings truly interesting on our hill. The young military goes on to my wish. Your friend, Mr. Kennedy, more than teaches; he inspires: such is the progress. How happy your kind aid to root and branch! Without it, *one* would have wanted the health-restoring air of Lyme, and the *other*, the unspeakable advantages of the most accomplished and most obliging of instructors.†

"Both the soldier and the lawyer beg to offer their respectful compliments."‡

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* The Rev. Edward Wilson, private tutor to Lord Chatham's children, and afterwards private tutor to William Pitt at the University of Cambridge. He died, in 1804, Rector of Binfield in Berkshire and a Canon of Windsor.

† To Lady Chatham Lord Chatham writes from Lyme Regis on the 11th of June—"Mr. Hollis came to us on Wednesday, and contrived to show me more beauties in the course of yesterday than I could have discovered without him in a twelvemonth. Amidst all the beauties of creation his own mind holds, by far, the most prominent place. He is the happiest of beings by dispensing continually happiness to others." *Chatham Correspondence*, vol. iv. p. 269.

‡ Lord Pitt, "the soldier," and William Pitt, "the lawyer," were severally pursuing their studies at Lyme Regis at this time. See *Chatham Correspondence*, vol. iv. pp. 266—270.

XXI.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *July 29th*, 1773.

"What thanks to Mr. Hollis can be enough for giving [me] to read immortal Buchanan, *De Jure*,—a volume, small in bulk, but big in matter—even all the length and breadth, depth and height, of that great argument, which the first geniuses, and master-spirits of the human race, have asserted so nobly. From him first, *ceu fonte perenni*, they have all drunk, and happiest who has drunk the deepest! Freedom looks down, well-pleased, upon the happy spot, to contemplate the truest of her sons strewing the pious oak-leaf over the deathless memory of the long-departed Buchanan. Could a *second* have sprung from the same country, what humiliations would have been saved to poor England! May your journey to Town be prosperous, and your return from the polluted capital be speedy!

"Lady Chatham presents her best compliments. She is just setting out for Lyme, to come back to-morrow.

"I have honoured my own name, as you so kindly wished."

XXII.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Sept*r. *12th*: 1773.

"All compliments and highest regards attend Mr. Hollis from Lord and Lady Chatham, ever flattered by the honor of his kind attentions, and the favourable and friendly interest he is so good to take in all that concerns them. They rejoice in the continuance of Mr. Hollis's health, and that he has not put it to the trial *ordeal* of London in the dog-days. Whenever he goes, all warm good wishes accompany him from Burton Pynsent. Our paper has not the letter signed 'Agricola.'* Lord Chatham proposes following the two boys to Lyme Regis, very shortly."

XXIII.

"LYME REGIS, *Sunday, Sept*r. *18th*, 1773.

"Lord Chatham returns very many thanks to Mr. Hollis for the honor of his obliging enquiries, to which the soldier citizen, and the

* "The letter signed Agricola, author unknown, was inserted in the S. J. C. [*St. James's Chronicle*?] of Septr. 4. 1773, and related to Corn, nationally considered." *Note by Hollis.*

lawyer of the Constitution, beg to add their respectful acknowledgments. He left all at Burton-Pynsent well, yesterday morning, and had the satisfaction to find the detached party at Lyme Regis in perfect health also. His own health is good, some equinoctial sensations of gout excepted.

"All wishes unite, under our roof, for the continuance of every felicity to Mr. Hollis.

"The letter signed 'Agricola' deserves all the kind sender of it said concerning it.* The happiest acquisition of new territory is encreased cultivation. The plough is an amiable conqueror, and far outshines the sword of Alexander.

'Omnis aratro
Dignus honos.'

"If Doctor Tucker should be open to treat for his house, I shall be desirous to take it, at an annual rent, furnished as it is, for a term of three years, with a clause of emption, *at my option*, at the end of that term. The sum for the purchase-money might be provisionally settled. Pardon this detail, which your goodness allows me to think not uninteresting to you."

XXIV.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Novr.* 30*th*, 1773.

"Lord Chatham, having his hands lame from gout, devolves to Lady Chatham the agreeable task of expressing to Mr. Hollis abundance of very sincere thanks for his most kind enquiry, and friendly wishes for the health of Burton-Pynsent and more particularly for the recovery of William. The post of yesterday brought, thank God, a most comfortable account; he having been out in a carriage, and gaining strength every day.

"Lord Chatham is greatly indebted to Mr. Hollis for the curious book, and for the permission to peruse it at leisure, after which it will be carefully returned.† The Author and the Recommender have excited no small impatience to read, as soon as gout allows.

"The winter-suns and winter-verdure of Lyme, are truly comfortable;

* "Thomas Hollis is sorry to send a dirty newspaper, scratched after the mode, to Lord Chatham; but the letter, signed Agricola, appears to be of so important, sublime, and beneficent a nature, that he believes his lordship will not be displeased to see it, though it is scratched and dirty." *Hollis to Lord Chatham*, 12 *Sept.* 1773.

† "A treatise 'of the Revenue of the Kings of England,' by the celebrated Sir John Fortescue; with a preface, by the late Judge, Sir John Fortescue Acland." *Note by Hollis.*

and we too can boast the brightening ray, and verdant sheep-walk upon our hill, as honest Bowring can testify, who gives us most real satisfaction by his good tidings of Mr. Hollis's perfect health."

XXV.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Saturday, December 11th*, 1773.

"A thousand thanks attend Mr. Hollis from Lord Chatham, for the most valuable Tract returned herewith. The noble author does honor to his age and country, and shows that old England could think and feel. The preface by the Editor is superexcellent, and does not degenerate from the venerable Chancellor, Chief Justice, and Patriot of the days of Plantagenet.

"Gout still hangs and prevents the use of the pen. A filial secretary with pleasure employs her hand. Lady Chatham, together with the rest of the circle, desires to present all compliments and sincere good wishes.

"Accounts from William continue more and more favourable." *

XXVI.

Lady Chatham to T. Hollis.

"BURTON-PYNSENT, *Dec.* 15*th*, 1773.

"Lady Chatham presents her best compliments to Mr. Hollis, and is extremely flattered by the honor of his very liberal present of hares from the sweet feed at Urles Hill, which gives them a very valued superiority.

"The expected Traveller is not yet arrived, the day of his leaving London having been postponed; but tomorrow, it is hoped, will bring him safe, and with encreased strength, to the ardent wishes of the whole family circle here. He will be made very proud and happy by the honor of Mr. Hollis's most obliging remembrance of him.

"Lady Chatham begs to present her best compliments to Mr. Hollis; rejoices much in the good account of his health, in which Lord Chatham, with all at Burton-Pynsent, join.

* Endorsed by Hollis,—"Lady Hester or Lady Harriot Pitt, Burton Pynsent, Dec. 11, 1773; received at Urles the same day by Farmer John Petty; answered Dec. 13."

"Gout continues to linger, and has been attended for three or four days past with cramps that are disagreeable." *

Mr. Hollis died on the 1st of January following the date of this letter.

* Endorsed by Hollis—"Lady Chatham, Burton Pynesent, Dec. 15, 1773, received the same day at Urles. Having sent her ladyship a basket of game, consisting of four hares and a woodcock."

END OF VOL. II.

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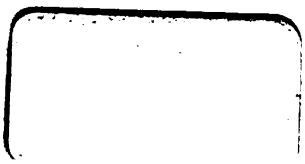

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